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PERIODICALS DEPARTMENT

EDITORIAL

THE PLOT THICKENS

The State Department calls Nicaragua's charge that C.I.A. agents plotted to assassinate a Sandinist official "paranoid," but it may be more common-sensical than pathological to fear the worst from Washington. The C.I.A. created a veritable Murder Inc. to aid, abet and accomplish the liquidation of various Third World personalities believed inimical to American interests of the moment: Rafael Trujillo in the Dominican Republic, Patrice Lumumba in the Congo, Ngo Dinh Diem in South Vietnam and Gen. René Schneider in Chile. And only this month word leaked out of a recent attempt to kill Lieut. Col. Desi Bouterse, the Prime Minister of Suriname.

A subsidiary company devoted its efforts exclusively to Fidel Castro. According to Senate Intelligence Committee documents, the C.I.A. made at least eight attempts on the Cuban's life, all the while devising ingenious harassments such as exploding cigars, beard depilatories and an itchy scuba suit. So it hardly takes much imagination for the Nicaraguans to believe that the C.I.A. planned to poison their Foreign Minister's benedictine—or, what is more likely, establish political contacts with forces committed to overthrowing the government.

It would be too much to ask that the United States admit those machinations in Nicaragua (although President Reagan now acknowledges his covert aid to the invading *contras*). But his reaction to Nicaragua's expulsion of three suspected American spies goes beyond retaliation to the point of provocative escalation of the already explosive Central American crisis.

The best method of de-escalation is public disclosure of the truth behind the C.I.A. rumors. Unfortunately, the agency has convinced the American Civil Liberties Union to agree to exempt "operational files" from the Freedom of Information Act. It's a dangerous exemption.

WHILE SOMEONE ELSE IS EATING (II)
Ron Arias

VOTER CHOICE IN HUNGARY
Frank Lipsius

TRANSPORTING 'SPENT FUEL'
Fred C. Shapiro

THE NEXT WAR IN LEBANON
Yahya Sadowski

'THE RADICAL PERSUASION'
Leon Fink

PROKOSCH'S 'VOICES'
Suzanne Mantell

LAST THOUGHTS ON PEACE

BRING THE P.L.O. INTO THE PROCESS

ISSAM SARTAWI

Dr. Sartawi's article is preceded by an explanatory note written by Lawrence Lifschultz, who writes frequently for the Far Eastern Economic Review *while pursuing his doctoral studies at King's College, Cambridge.*

The death of Dr. Issam Sartawi, the Palestine Liberation Organization's representative for Western Europe, who was assassinated in Portugal on April 10, has left—if only for the moment—a large vacuum. Dr. Sartawi stood for a political principle that has never been genuinely tried as the basis of a Middle East peace settlement, and that remains the only conceivable approach to halt the conflict.

Since the early 1970s, Dr. Sartawi had been at the forefront of diplomatic and popular initiatives to achieve a comprehensive settlement in the region based on self-determination for both Palestinians and Jews through reciprocal recognition by Israel and the P.L.O. Through his unremitting personal efforts, European leaders like former Austrian Chancellor Bruno Kreisky and former French Prime Minister Pierre Mendes-France became active intermediaries in the peace process, advocating a negotiated settlement based on the establishment of a Palestinian state.

After Dr. Sartawi commanded Palestinian forces at the battle of Karame in the 1968 war, his views underwent a fundamental transformation. He gradually abandoned his belief that armed struggle was the only means of securing a Palestinian homeland, and ultimately came to favor an ongoing "dialogue" leading to mutual

(*Continued on Page 768*)

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LETTERS.

WHO'S A COLD WAR LIBERAL?

New York City

Andrew Kopkind has cited me as a cold war liberal, which I resent very much ["Letters," *The Nation*, June 4]. Kopkind points to a theater review I wrote as evidence of villainy. I doubt he actually saw the production in question; otherwise, he might have understood my comments. Presumably, I'm a cold war liberal also because I criticized Kopkind in *The Village Voice*. In that same article I urged radical and liberal writers to come to E.P. Thompson's defense. What kind of cold war liberal am I supposed to be, then? A cold warrior who opposes the cold war and supports the peace movement? I stand by my original complaint against Kopkind. His theory of cold war liberalism is to a regrettable degree a method for smearing people he happens not to like. Offer an opinion Andrew Kopkind disagrees with and presto, you're a cold war liberal. Does he disagree emphatically? You may well represent an entire wing of cold war liberalism.

Paul Berman

KOPKIND REPLIES

New York City

I pointed to Berman's review as an example of his homophobia. I didn't need to see the production to have the bigotry of his criticism smack me in the face. Berman pointedly declines to explain, much less justify, his deeply offensive remarks. What he now writes is evasive and beside the point.

Andrew Kopkind

C.N.D. AND THE BRITISH ELECTION

New York City

Paul Barker's cynical and convoluted account of the British election seems determined to give the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament a premature burial ["Missile Election," *The Nation*, June 4]. According to his scenario, any election result would signal the campaign's demise: a Tory victory would be a clear vote against Labor's unilateralism (and against C.N.D.), while a Labor majority would only be won on a wide range of issues, proving nothing about the electorate's support for nuclear disarmament. As a mere popular movement, he says, C.N.D. can't hope to survive. It will be properly crushed under the wheels of parliamentary democracy: "As is true with all mass movements, the C.N.D.'s support is volatile; it could vanish as quickly as it appeared."

It suits the peace movement's opponents to present this election as a single-issue contest, just as they did the West German election last March. But Thatcher's success and Labor's disarray can't be explained by anything as simple as fear of unilateral disarmament. Nor can the strength of C.N.D. be measured in parliamentary seats.

C.N.D. is important precisely because it is a popular movement, the first to emerge in Britain in many years. In a broad coalition with feminist, antiracist and labor organizations, C.N.D. has provided the most convincing and creative challenge to Thatcherism, and to the stultification of the Labor Party. C.N.D.'s supporters know that it is not in the British Parliament that the future of nuclear weapons will be decided, but in the high councils of NATO and the Warsaw Pact—and on the streets of Europe. The European peace movement has already forced Reagan to abandon the zero option, to pay some attention to arms control negotiations and to moderate his rhetoric if not his military spending. If there is any hope at all of avoiding nuclear annihilation, it depends on our being able to look beyond the old authorities and political forms. Paul Barker's shortsightedness does that slim hope a deep disservice.

Maria Margaronis

GANDHI IN PALESTINE

Washington

"Gandhi in Gaza" [editorial, *The Nation*, May 28] insightfully recommends that the Palestinians choose nonviolent civil disobedience as a strategy for "the powerless" in the West Bank and Gaza who are currently "being robbed of their birthright by the powerful." The editorial goes on to describe Israel as "still a democracy." Perhaps it is for its Jewish citizens, but not for either Arabs in Israel or Palestinians in the occupied areas that Israel has not yet annexed. Ironically, Israel has prohibited the showing of the movie *Gandhi* in the West Bank and Gaza. A film about nonviolence and the life of Gandhi apparently is too provocative for the Israeli occupation authorities.

Lawrence Doyle

WITH THE WORKERS IN POLAND

New York City

We are artists, intellectuals, trade unionists, religious leaders and political people active in progressive movements in the United States. Some of us spend much of our time working in the peace movement. It is our profound conviction that intellectual and artistic freedom and the freedom to organize democratic movements without official interference are essential if humanity is to progress to a just and peaceful world.

It is with much disquiet that we hear of plans in Poland to try former members of the Workers Defense Council (KOR), as well as several leaders of the trade union Solidarity. These people, who stand for the same principles of social justice, peace, freedom and human and workers' rights that we do, have already been held without charges for fourteen months.

The conviction and sentencing of these individuals would be used by the most reactionary elements in our own society to justify retrogressive social and cold war policies. We oppose any persecution of these individuals, our fellow human beings, and ask for their release as well as for the release of all others who have been imprisoned in Poland for their union activities. Readers interested in more information may contact the Campaign for Peace and Democracy East and West, 301 W. 105 St., Apt. 2R, New York, NY 10025; (212) 222-9703.

Edward Asner, Steven M. Becker
Jack Berkowitz, Muriel Buttinger
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Paul Robeson Jr., Edward Said
Janet Shenk, Pam Solo
Eric Stern, I.F. Stone
Paul M. Sweezy, Ida Torres
Andrzej Tymowski, Mary Anne Vincent
Jim Wallis, James Weinstein
William A. Winpisinger
Max Wohl and Sylvia Wohl
Anne B. Zill
(a partial list of signatories)

WHAT KIDS KNOW

Ithaca, N.Y.

While Tracy Freedman and David Weir's gruesome article, "Polluting the Most Vulnerable" [*The Nation*, May 14], may be news to adults, kids have known it for a long time, at least with respect to the long-term health effects of radioactive waste. Drs. William Beardslee and John Mack's study, "The Impact on Children and Adolescents of Nuclear Developments," conducted between 1978 and 1980 under the auspices of the American Psychiatric Association, shows that a significant number of American children think nuclear power offers questionable benefits and is not safe. What's more, in one study sample, more than 70 percent of high school girls and about 50 percent of high school boys "felt that radiation from nuclear wastes and nuclear power plants would shorten their lives." Children may be vulnerable, but they can recognize betrayal, perhaps more quickly than adults.

Metta Winter

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EDITORIALS.

By Brute Force

There are many euphemisms for the word "totalitarian," and the ugly locution "apartheid" is at once the most repugnant and the most deceptive. Translated from its native Afrikaans and rendered as "separate development," it sounds innocuous enough. In practice, it reveals itself as a system of indentured labor, police repression, religious mania and racial taboo. We stress "totalitarian" because of all the dictatorships favored by current U.S. policy, the South African is without doubt the most absolute. Even in the best interpretation of the authoritarian state, some place is reserved for the private life and the autonomous individual. South Africa does not even pretend to such hypocrisy. A black citizen of that republic is at once the property of the state (in point of law) and the property of his or her employer (in point of practice). Whether domestic servants, wage laborers or dwellers in the fictitious "homelands," black Africans have no rights or status in their own country. The demented nature of the politics of this system can be seen from the three social prohibitions it enforces most solemnly. People of different shades may not eat together, sleep together or visit the bathroom together. Thus racism abolishes everyday human life as well as political rights. How could it do otherwise?

Yet the United States is the patron of the vile system of apartheid. No exile in the dusty Bantustans can see America

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as anything but an ally of the Boer hierarchy. Jeane Kirkpatrick had been in office for less than three months when she met secretly with the South African military and then lied about the occasion. She was only doing the bidding of the President, who has made plain his desire for improved relations with Pretoria and who has dragged his feet on the Namibia negotiations since taking the oath of office. And the role of U.S. multinational corporations in sustaining South Africa's economy is well known.

Until recently, opposition to this country's support of South Africa was on moral grounds. But there is every sign that it is about to become a political question as well. Save your pity, say the militants of the African National Congress. If pity and outrage were any help, we would have been enfranchised two decades ago. Everything short of armed struggle has been treated with contempt and repression by South Africa's rulers. The flash point has been reached. What happened to the Portuguese colonists in Angola and Mozambique, and to the white settlers in Rhodesia, cannot long be postponed in the very heartland of white domination. The good faith of Prime Minister P.W. Botha has already been tested—and found wanting—in the Namibia talks. It is perfectly clear that the South Africans will not surrender their stolen territory. It is equally clear that they will not release the spokesmen for Namibia, whom they keep in Robben Island prison. If that is how they deal with a black challenge from the periphery, imagine how they will deal with one in the metropolis itself.

The first stirrings of violent resistance have been met with brute reaction. For example, it seems at least probable that recent bomb attacks in Pretoria were set by white members of the A.N.C. (who relied on the reflexes of racism in order to get near their targets). Yet the government's response was to bomb factories in Mozambique. That action translates apartheid from an "internal affair" to a problem of international aggression—another sin our authoritarian allies supposedly do not commit. As Gen. Constant Viljoen, the head of the country's defense forces, put it recently, South Africa will find and destroy its internal enemies on the territory of its neighbors.

It is degrading to regard South Africa in terms of U.S. interests rather than in terms of principles. But the crisis in that country is a challenge to America as a multiracial society with (presumably) a multiracial foreign policy. It is a challenge to any country that spouts fine words about the "leadership of the free world"—however that freedom may be defined. Probably, like most such challenges, it will be publicized only by liberals and radicals. Then, when the disaster strikes, they will be thanked for their warnings by the accusation of having "lost" South Africa. Ho-hum. We will keep on mentioning it anyway.

Postscript. On June 9 the South African government escalated the internal violence by hanging three A.N.C. guerrillas. In the face of protests from Britain, the Netherlands and India, and from the European Common Market and the U.N. Security Council, Pretoria revealed its contempt for world opinion and signaled its determination to fight a race war through to the bloody end.

Of Bees and Trees

"Bees do it," reported the noted Broadway entomologist Cole Porter in his 1928 show *Paris*. Little did he know that he had foretold a possible solution to the riddle of "yellow rain." Recently, a Harvard biochemist named Matthew Meselson presented plausible evidence that the basic ingredient in the toxic damp allegedly spread by the Vietnamese in Laos and Cambodia is apian excrement.

It seems that Southeast Asian bees spend all winter in their hives, which have no indoor plumbing. In the spring they buzz outside and excrete their wastes, which contain the pollen they ate the previous summer. Meselson found that samples of bee do closely resemble the government's samples of yellow rain. The toxic ingredient in yellow rain is a derivative of the *Fusarias* fungus, and the pollen could have been naturally tainted by *Fusarias* spores. Thus killer bee do could be the culprit in the poisoning that the State Department was quick to blame on the Red Queen and her Vietnamese drones.

By hastily going public with its suspicions that the Vietnamese were engaged in chemical warfare, the State Department injected additional poison into the atmosphere of U.S.-Soviet relations. And the "evidence" was coupled with charges that the Russians are using poison gas in Afghanistan to become the basis of the Administration's case for renovating the U.S. biological-chemical arsenal. Fortunately, last year Congress voted down funds Reagan had requested to begin production of binary poison gas projectiles. But Congress had earlier funded construction of a factory to produce the shells, and it is unlikely that scientific or other evidence casting doubt on the Administration's scare stories will deter Reagan from seeking the money to put that factory into operation.

Consider the campaign to build the MX, which was intensified by the famous "window of vulnerability" tale. Recently, the Scowcroft Commission slammed the window shut, yet Congress went ahead and authorized the initial appropriations for the MX system to placate Reagan.

Another of Uncle Ron's ripping yarns, also designed to promote a U.S. military buildup and downgrade arms negotiations, had the Russians violating the SALT agreements. The President was abetted by his conservative allies in Congress. Senators Steve Symms and James McClure of Idaho accused the other side of illicit missile testing and of using lasers to zap the eyes out of one of our space satellites. But neither gentleman would reveal the precise dates of the alleged violations. Thus it is impossible to know if the SALT II agreement was in place when they occurred. As Harold Jackson of *The Guardian* wrote recently, a 1975 laser beam incident was thoroughly investigated at the time and was related to breaks in Soviet natural gas pipelines.

Instead of waiting for scientific evidence, in the case of yellow rain, or activating the investigatory machinery under the SALT I treaty, in the case of the alleged missile-testing violations, the Reagan Administration preferred to huddle

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in its cave and hurl imprecations at the rival tribe.

The Environmental Protection Agency under Anne Burford claimed that the case against acid rain was not proved and called for more studies. Perhaps if the State Department had exercised similar rigor in assessing the yellow rain story, its credibility would not now be in question. There is growing evidence that as well as poisoning fish, acid rain is destroying trees in New England. What the trees are saying about acid rain is not on record, but they are undoubtedly saying something. Scientists recently announced that trees do communicate. They warn one another of insect attacks, for example. Like Reagan's proposed MX missiles, trees have no mobile basing system; nor can they threaten massive retaliation to acid rain attacks. Their defenses are purely passive, consisting of chemical changes that make their leaves more unpalatable to marauders. It is humans who conceive missiles and dioxin. This summer, talk to a tree and watch how the busy bee doth improve each shining hour.

Give Us the Jobs

All the Democratic Presidential candidates talk about unemployment, but *doing* something about it means the government must guarantee full-time work for anyone who needs it. As unemployment and underemployment mount—20 million people were out of work at some point last year, and millions have grown discouraged and dropped out of the labor market—a majority of Americans see the lack of jobs as the country's number-one problem. An increasing number of the unemployed have started to organize—in self-help groups (there are twenty-three such groups in St. Paul alone) and unemployment committees. These groups are demanding a moratorium on foreclosures, the extension of credit and unemployment benefits and the provision of medical care. These concrete proposals would help the unemployed cope with their present plight, but the jobless must also organize in behalf of the larger goal of job creation.

Every recent public opinion poll has indicated strong support for the notion that the government should provide jobs for those who can't find them in the private sector, and it is clear that the private sector cannot provide enough jobs.

Labor groups throughout Europe are now demanding that 1 percent of their countries' gross national products be set aside for job creation. Workers in this country should follow suit. Such a "social investment" could produce millions of jobs, and should be part of any reindustrialization plan.

An expanding economy, increased productivity and reindustrialization will not automatically create jobs. What this country needs is employment-centered growth, which would foster demand for the goods and services offered by the kinds of firms that tend to employ many people, not a few highly skilled workers. The government should use its taxing, buying, lending and regulating power to encourage the expansion of industries that will create jobs. Otherwise, there is a danger of *jobless growth* (it is not irrelevant that the Administration proposes to define "acceptable" unemployment as at least 7.5 percent). The country needs a jobs-now movement. It is possible to create jobs quickly, as was proved by CETA and other emergency employment programs in the 1970s.

Unemployment is costly to society. For every 1 million jobless workers, America loses nearly $100 billion in goods and services and the Federal Treasury loses $30 billion in unemployment benefits and taxes. Creating a million jobs, which would not cost more than $30 billion, would return money to the Treasury via taxes and decreased unemployment insurance payments. In addition, greater consumer purchasing power would stimulate the economy. It is important to recognize that creating jobs, which in turn increases demand, is the road to recovery—a direct road with immediate benefits to people, in contrast to the long-range, indirect, trickle-down approach of the Administration. The country needs a demand-side, bottom-up response to unemployment, not supply-side, top-down rhetoric.

Contrary to popular wisdom, creating jobs would not necessarily increase the deficit significantly. Under the CETA program, which conservatives decried as a great boondoggle, the average weekly wage was $150—not much higher than the average weekly unemployment benefit of $113. Thirty billion dollars could create a million jobs paying between $15,000 and $20,000 a year, and there would be money left over to administer the program.

Where do we get the $30 billion? There are a number of possibilities: (1) the 1983 income tax cut could be postponed, rescinded or limited to $700 per person; (2) the military budget could be cut; (3) the deficit could be increased *temporarily* by $30 billion (remember, the money will come back via taxes, savings on unemployment insurance and increased purchasing power).

What kinds of jobs can be created? Most states have cut back on spending for services, and there is clearly a need to take up the slack. In a sense, a Federal jobs program would be a form of revenue sharing. The A.F.L.-C.I.O. has recommended that Washington appropriate $10 billion to enable local governments to hire more child-care workers, security guards for schools and housing projects and staff members for correctional facilities. The country's infrastructure—its roads, highways and bridges—is in great need of improvement. Others call for wage subsidies for employers in the private sector as an incentive to create new jobs.

Any program of public jobs for the 1980s must address important problems that earlier jobs programs did not. For example, all workers must be automatically trained and their skills upgraded; 20 percent of the workweek should be set aside for that purpose.

What is needed is a full-employment movement that would seek to do something about our most urgent domestic problem, just as the nuclear freeze movement is addressing the greatest problem in the international sphere. Guaranteed jobs would be its central demand.

FRANK RIESSMAN

Frank Riessman is the editor of Social Policy.

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DISPATCHES.

■ AUSTRALIA: More C.I.A. Revelations

The highly secret intelligence links between the United States and Australia have been the subject of a number of exposés in the Australian and U.S. press. The most serious charge of all—a story that will not die despite repeated U.S. denials—is that the Central Intelligence Agency destabilized the Labor government of Prime Minister Gough Whitlam in 1974 and 1975.

Last month, *The National Times*, a Sydney weekly, published a probe of the Australian Security Intelligence Organization (A.S.I.O.), based, the paper said, on "tens of thousands of classified documents." Among other things, the first article reported that A.S.I.O. officials had for years provided the C.I.A. with "potentially damaging" personal information on Australian political figures.

A U.S. Defense Department document obtained by "Dispatches" suggests still another possible area of secret U.S.-Australian cooperation—the joint testing of chemical weapons in Australia. The document does not establish that the testing took place, but it does describe U.S. efforts to persuade Australian officials to inaugurate such a program and offers advice on how to deal with opposition to it. The "background brief," which is dated November 25, 1964, states:

> Chemical testing in Australia has been under consideration for the last two years. It has been determined by a joint survey team in Australia (approved by the Australian Minister for Defense) and discussions with Australian personnel that (a) suitable test sites exist in Australia, (b) joint participation in a chemical test program would be mutually advantageous and (c) Australian personnel contacted would favor establishment of subject project. Suitable sites for the planned tests are not available elsewhere.

The document goes on to say that both Secretary of State Dean Rusk and Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara had discussed the matter with Australian officials, including Sir Paul Hasluck, Minister for External Affairs. Hasluck reported his "anticipation of continued resistance" from the Cabinet and "requested additional presentational materials" to help overcome it. Unidentified Americans came to his aid:

> Two possibilities for meeting the presentational problem were suggested: (a) a "cover story" approach that would describe activities taking place in connection with the testing as an outside observer might see them but providing an innocuous explanation for them, and (b) an essentially straight story emphasizing the defensive equipment and techniques to be tested.

The brief concludes that the U.S. government was prepared to accept Hasluck's "judgment of the political infeasibility of pushing [the testing]." Evidently the Johnson Administration had the decency to leave the final decision to the Australians; ten years later, if the Whitlam story is true, the Nixon Administration treated the government of an old ally with the same respect it showed for the government of Salvador Allende in Chile.

■ INDIA: The Sikh Secessionists

In early April, Avtar Singh Atwal, the Deputy Inspector General of Police for the northern Indian state of Punjab, stopped off at the Golden Temple in Amritsar, the holiest of Sikh shrines, to worship. Leaving his bodyguard behind, Atwal started to walk from his chauffered car toward the temple. A moment later he was killed by a hail of bullets. The assassin is believed to be a proponent of the creation of an independent Sikh nation, called Khalistan, in the Punjab.

Although the shooting took place before dozens of people, the assassin has not been arrested, and even the authorities believe he took sanctuary inside the temple, a hotbed of sympathizers of the Akali Dal Party, the main Sikh nationalist group. Police have refused to enter the shrine, fearing that they would touch off even greater political unrest.

The Sikh autonomy movement began last year under moderate Akali leaders, but it has gradually been taken over by right-wing religious fanatics who demand an independent Sikh state. The autonomy talks in New Delhi have broken down, and according to Venugopala Rao of Interlink (a Third World wire service based in New York City), at a meeting last month, 100,000 volunteers for a "sacrificial squad" swore allegiance to the extremist religious leader Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. Bhindranwale told his men to prepare for a "holy war to secure our just and genuine rights," beginning June 17.

Although Bhindranwale has not called for Sikh independence outright, he does allow the Golden Temple, which he controls, to be used as a refuge for advocates of armed rebellion. In addition to harboring Atwal's assassin, the Golden Temple is home to Balbir Singh Sandhu, the secretary general of the National Council of Khalistan, the self-styled ruling body of the future republic. "We have to snatch power whatever the means," Sandhu told *India Today*.

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi understands the snatching of power too—and she is unlikely to allow the country's richest state, India's breadbasket, to slip from her grasp.

■ SYRIA: Little and Big Brotherhoods

The U.S. press has been virtually unanimous in its interpretation of Syria's recent bellicose posturing. According to the pack punditry, President Hafez al-Assad was so angered by the U.S.-engineered agreement between Israel and Lebanon that he resolved to disrupt what Radio Damascus calls "son of Camp David." The conventional wisdom also darkly depicts the Soviet Union as egging Syria on in an effort to regain its former influence in the region. All this seems obvious enough, but in the Middle East, truth often is what doesn't meet the eye.

Assad and his brother Rifaat, Syria's security chief, are members of the Alawites, an Islamic sect that makes up about 12 percent of the country's population. (The majority of Syrians are Sunni Moslems.) The Alawite officer corps in the air force and in the army's elite units are the sect's only significant constituencies.

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KAI BIRD AND MAX HOLLAND

Last summer's war in Lebanon tarnished the reputations of both services—particularly the air force—and this in turn posed a threat to Assad's power. The only way to keep his friends in the military happy was to give them newer, more sophisticated weapons. And so Defense Minister Gen. Mustapha Tlas was dispatched to the Soviet Union, the only country that would consider Syria's shopping list. As the press has amply reported, the mission was a success. The SAM-5s Syria received, among other hardware, had never before been shipped outside the Soviet Union.

The rub is that by moving closer to the Russians, Assad courts danger at home from the Sunni majority, which he has excluded from power. The opposition is spearheaded by the Moslem Brotherhood, a pan-Arab group founded in 1928 during the Arab struggle against European colonialism. Though certainly not pro-Western, the Brotherhood has even less use for atheistic Communists. In February 1982, the big Brotherhood came close to unseating the little (Assad) brotherhood. An uprising in Hama was put down by loyal Alawite soldiers at a terrible cost—nearly 10,000 civilian casualties and the destruction of much of the city.

In the wake of its defeat at Hama, the Brotherhood has split into two factions. The so-called "political tendency" is led by 54-year-old Adnan Saadeddin, who has concentrated his efforts on forging a coalition of all the anti-Assad groups, including the secular ones. To win their allegiance, Saadeddin has called for the establishment of a parliamentary democracy after Assad's downfall, in which all groups would have political rights "provided they do not advocate atheism or seek links with a foreign power." The other faction, Talia al-Mukatila (Fighting Vanguard), is dedicated to achieving an Islamic state; it is secretive and close-knit and wants to overthrow Assad by violence. Led by 35-year-old Adnan Okla, the Vanguard refuses to cooperate with the secular opposition; in mid-March, it reportedly resumed its guerrilla war.

Which brings us to Assad's current war talk. Is there a better way to deflect opposition to an unprecedented Soviet influx than raising the specter of a renewed war with Israel?

■ BRITAIN: Maggie's Mayaguez

More than 500 Argentine sailors lost their lives on the afternoon of May 2, 1982, when the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano was torpedoed by a British submarine. In a recent issue of the *New Statesman*, Paul Foot reports some startling facts about the sinking of the Belgrano. When the ship was struck, forty miles outside the British Navy's "total exclusion zone" around the Falklands, it was actually heading away from the islands and from the British Naval Task Force. At least 350 miles from the nearest British surface ship and armed with guns with a range of only thirteen miles, the forty-five-year-old cruiser clearly was not a threat to the Task Force, Foot concludes.

The ship went down only hours before the Argentine junta agreed to sign a seven-point plan negotiated by Secretary of State Alexander Haig and Peruvian President Fernando Belaúnde Terry, which the British had already accepted. At best, Maggie Thatcher committed an administrative blunder in not stopping the attack. The sinking of the Belgrano was her Mayaguez—only it had far graver consequences. The peace initiative was torpedoed as well, and hundreds of British and Argentine lives were lost by prolonging a war that should never have been fought in the first place.

■ SENEGAL: Money and Politics

The "brotherhood" still rules in Senegal. In February, this country of sprawling peanut plantations held nationwide elections. Former President Leopold Senghor's handpicked successor, Abdou Diouf, won 84 percent of the presidential vote, and his party took 111 of the 120 parliamentary seats. But Senegal's two main brotherhoods, the Mourides and the Tijani, were the real winners. The role of the brotherhoods is difficult to explain to Westerners. They aren't political parties, though their members are highly nationalistic. They aren't exactly religious organizations, though their rhetoric sometimes sounds like that of Islamic fundamentalists. They preach salvation through hard work, rather than prayer or fasting. And their caliphs, or religious directors, make a practice of flaunting their wealth.

In the recent elections, the caliphs discarded their traditional pretense of impartiality and campaigned openly for Diouf. Abdu Lahath Mbake, the caliph of the 1-million-member Mourides, endorsed Diouf in a sermon in the Grand Mosque of Touba. Abdul Aziz Sy, caliph of the urban-based Tijani, used some of his considerable fortune (from real estate and cement) to blanket the electorate with pro-Diouf propaganda.

Why did the caliphs risk sullying their religious reputations by engaging in partisan politics? "We are a threat to the caliphs' businesses," Fara Ndiaye, deputy leader of the Senegalese Democratic Party, the major opposition party, told "Dispatches." "The government favors economic development based on external aid and the export of peanuts. We want to grow less peanuts and more food." Fewer peanuts would, of course, cut into the business of the peanut oil monopoly, of which a principal shareholder is the caliph of the Mourides.

The payoff came after the election, when Diouf appointed a Mouride to the critical post of Minister of Rural Development. The new minister's first official act was to announce the resumption of an expensive government program to provide seeds to peanut planters at enormous discounts. Cancellation of the program was an important condition imposed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in return for rescheduling the Senegalese debt and extending development aid. A team of World Bank officials arrived in Dakar the week the decision to reinstate the subsidy was announced, and angrily demanded a meeting with the new minister. Someone should have told the bankers that in Senegal, brotherhood runs deep.

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ARTICLES.

WHILE SOMEONE ELSE IS EATING—II

The Rooster That Called Me Home

This is the second in a series of articles that will appear in The Nation *about how some people are being made to live in America today. In the first article, "Carla: 'It's Very Hard to Say I'm Poor,' " the Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Maxine Kumin described the life of a single parent and her children in a small New Hampshire town.*

The writers of the series are all novelists or poets. They were not given "assignments"; they were asked to write about the human costs of President Reagan's policies, and they chose their subjects under that rubric. The idea was to free them from all the constraints of journalism save one: that of grounding their work in reality. Our aim was to gather an uneven collection, each piece as unique as the voice and the sensibility of the artist who wrote it.

Some pieces will be edited for length. The articles will be published in their entirety by Doubleday/Anchor Press under the title While Someone Else is Eating.

RON ARIAS

Recently I was pulled home by a rooster, a scrawny, whitish creature, 3 months old and yellowing around the edges. He lived under a ventilated milk-carton crate, which had been squeezed and tucked into a corner of the room crowded with shoes of all sizes and clothes piled on nails in the walls. This rooster, when allowed to roam around the apartment, made the same movements all roosters do—jerkily tilting his head as he eyeballed the world for food, lifting a graceful, splayed foot an inch or two in the air, then moving on, ever searching, ever dumb. At the same time, a white pigeon flew from the top of the refrigerator to a portrait of Jesus Christ across the room.

I had just finished an interview with an absolutely poor man and his wife, yet I was inexplicably unmoved by their plight. I was about to go when the rooster stirred, and my host asked if I'd like to see him. That's when I felt the tug. There, across the warped linoleum, the rooster began to scavenge and pose, drawing me back to a time thirty-five years ago when I had played among chickens, chased them, fed them, watched them die, often ate them. I was 6, living with my grandmother and two great-aunts on the outskirts of El Paso. I thought everyone had chickens; they seemed more common, more *heard*, than cats or dogs. And a rooster's crow at dawn simply meant, Everything's O.K., you can wake up now. For me, a first grader at Ascarate Elementary School, that magnificent, gut-holding screech was as gentle as the Schubert "Ave Maria," soothingly delivered by radio every afternoon as a prelude to the most delicious siestas of my life.

I still take naps when I can, and occasionally I think I feel an adobe-cooled breeze reach me across the years here in California. But I never see live, free-running chickens anymore—unless I'm in a Mexican neighborhood, and even there they're always outdoors. (The last time I saw farm animals kept indoors was years ago in Peru, when I was with the Peace Corps.) Yet here I was, practically across the street from some of the classiest real estate in the world—Los Angeles's cluster of new high-rising banks and hotels—watching a rooster exercise in someone's apartment and ducking to avoid a pigeon's low passes. "He only hits the wall," Amparo, my hostess, said gingerly, more worried about the rooster messing on the floor than about me being impaled by a bird's beak.

Moments later, the rooster was placed under his crate and I said goodbye. Amparo waved from the entrance of the shabby, three-story apartment house. I drove off to more interviews with poor people in their apartments, in clinics, in soup lines and in hovels along the railroad tracks and freeways leading out of and into Los Angeles.

Of all those people, Amparo, her husband, Julio, and their six children were probably the most pitiable. At least they gave me every reason to feel pity—yet I felt none. Instead, I felt something else.

Admittedly Amparo and Julio's case is unusual. Ten years ago they entered California illegally from Mexico. For six years they worked in a sort of take-out slaughterhouse. There were pens containing goats, cattle, sheep, hogs and poultry, from which customers would select animals and explain how they wanted the meat cut. Within minutes, it would be neatly sliced, wrapped and ready to go. Julio—tall, strong and intelligent—soon became the dynamo and foreman of the operation, which did so well that his crew could hardly keep up with the orders from restaurants and for parties and weddings. Amparo, which means "help" in Spanish, became head cook and laundress for the workers, most of whom were from her hometown in the state of Jalisco. In return, the owner gave the family its meals and shelter, in addition to paying Julio $80 a week.

One night four years ago, in a moment of carelessness, Julio brought disaster on them all: he broke his neck. He drove his old Plymouth around a corner too fast and hit a curb; the jolt snapped his spinal cord. In an instant he became a quadriplegic.

Since then, the owner of the slaughterhouse has closed the business. Helpless, Julio became a ward of the California

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Ron Arias writes fiction in the dreamy and laconic language of the Southwest. He has lived in West Texas, California, Mexico, Peru, Venezuela and Argentina, and the world of immigrants is his major interest. Arias is a member of the board of the Coordinating Council of Literary Magazines. His stories have been widely published, and his novel, The Road to Tamazunchale *(Pajarito Publishers), was nominated for a National Book Award.*

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and Los Angeles County medical systems. For a year and a half he was kept on a respirator; then he started recuperative therapy. Several times he was released from the hospital, only to be readmitted after developing complications. He almost died in a county hospital—from "neglect," Amparo explained, not complaining but stating the facts. He developed bedsores on his legs the size of her fist, "open, down to the bone." She drew back the sheet so I could see the monstrous scars and stitch lines from the operation in which a chunk of his calf was transplanted into the gaping sore in his thigh.

"They didn't turn him," Amparo said. "I would have to sneak into the hospital and do the turning myself." She told me about her husband's cracked, white lips. "I asked the nurse why she didn't give him water, and she said the glass of water was right there by his table, right in front of his eyes. 'But he can't move his hands,' I said. And she just acted as if it wasn't her fault he was paralyzed."

Julio survived the hospital ordeal, but his wife now has the job of caring for an invalid. "I do everything for him," she said. She mentioned this in passing, while talking about a new and cheaper kind of adult-size disposable diaper. Changing him and collecting his urine are automatic, unquestioned duties for her, much as feeding her children or braiding the hair of her three girls.

For a while, Medi-Cal and the state's disability insurance helped the family pay for supplies and medical care. Under recent regulations, however, Julio no longer receives medical benefits, and the family is dependent on his $200 monthly disability payment. Amparo cannot hold a job because she must take care of her husband. And their rent—$325 a month—is long overdue.

But Amparo and Julio's woes are minor compared with the dragon lurking in their future: deportation. "What will happen if you're sent back to Mexico?" I asked Julio.

"I'll die," he said. He meant that since government assistance and the prospects for making any money would be virtually nonexistent in Mexico, death would be a certainty. Julio, somehow tall even in bed, gestured with a tilt of his head, as if picking out steers for slaughter, ordering his men to grab this one or that one. "I'll die."

Amparo explained that several years ago they almost received "green cards." They had only to sign some papers and pick up the necessary documents at the U.S. Consulate in Guadalajara. They were about to do this when Julio had his accident. "Two years went by before I could think of anything else," she said. "Now it's too late. But I'll keep trying."

"Trying" means that if Immigration and Naturalization Service agents knock on their door before their landlord evicts them, they'll try to use their American-born youngest child as an immigration toehold.

Meanwhile, Amparo, like the boxed-in rooster, stays close to the apartment, going out only a few times a day. She is never away from Julio for long and is constantly watchful for *la migra*, those uniformed women and men whose job it is to find illegal immigrants. "I used to be timid," she said. "Before the accident I was the quiet one. I let my husband do all the talking. He made the decisions. Now I do everything. I talk things over with him, but I do everything." Amparo sounded surprised at her admission, but there was also a hint of pride in her voice. Then she swept her hand over her hair, which was gathered tightly in back; it was showing some gray, a bit prematurely for a woman still in her mid-30s. During the interview, she bustled about—bringing me coffee, showing a neighbor some dress material purchased in Tijuana, massaging Julio, putting a glass of water to his lips, and selling candies, little caramel and lemon drop paper-wrapped candies, to a seemingly endless procession of preschoolers, all of whom lived in the apartment building. One after another, their tiny hands opened like flowers, and Amparo plucked out the pennies, nickels and dimes, then dropped the goodies in each hand. A coffee cup on the dresser by her husband's bed served as a cash register. She appeared to recount the coins as she deposited them. "Pennies pay for bread," she said, smiling.

Julio's room was crowded. Behind me was a tall dresser crowned with an old television. He doesn't watch much, he

DRAWINGS BY RANDALL ENOS

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said, because it's all the same—"same people, same stories." His kids, though, come in to watch, and his room has become a place for visits, for talk, even for worship. Christ, two saints and the Virgin of Guadalupe look on from the walls and shelves. A priest comes now and then to hear confession; Julio told me that if he could finger his rosary beads, which hang from his bed, he would. Calendars, posters and pictures hang near the bed, and everywhere, it seems, boxes, bottles and paper shopping bags are neatly tucked or stacked.

This cataloguing of details is a reporter's reflex; here it was almost a distraction, a time-passer, a way to tell myself I was "catching" poverty. Years ago, when I was reporting on the poor in Latin America, I fell into the same habit. I wondered then why I had none of the missionary's zeal for fighting inequality or righting wrongs. I do know that I frequently empathized with those people--not out of pity but out of a common experience, one which in my case was rooted in those rural Texas days of my childhood. I've never trusted the easy emotions aroused by the sight of beggars, invalids, the homeless, the hungry. Perhaps it's because such emotions are so short-lived, do not reach deep enough, do not touch our shared origins and our common destiny as bones and dust.

So I waited. Amparo and Julio told me their stories, showed me pictures of their children, proudly singling out a snapshot of the eldest girl leading her school's drill team with chin and chest out. I continued to wait. I would not force truth here, would not pry into something as private as how people cope with misfortune. If sympathy or insight would come, it would come. But nothing that touched my emotions or memories occurred until that leggy, scrawny rooster freed my mind.

Suddenly Amparo could easily have been my wise and tough great-aunt Concha, or my other great-aunt, Pema, the tender one. Or the decision maker, my grandmother Julia. But it was Concha whom Amparo most resembled. Concha had brown-stained, calloused fingers. With one hand she could roll a cigarette and pull the drawstring of her little tobacco pouch, and with the thumb and forefinger of the other hand she could pinch off the match flame. She was forever busy, storing her bottles and boxes, counting her pennies, sewing, knitting, gardening.

Like Amparo, Concha and her two sisters were ranch women who came north to wash floors, cook and clean for others. They knew about cattle, about hides, about butchering, about birds in the kitchen. They could joke about death one day, and the next day don black dresses and go into a period of mourning that lasted for months. I remember the men, too, vaguely. They were strong-willed, wind-hardened fellows from the steppes of Chihuahua, with boots and blocked hats—laconic and stoic, used to hardship and disappointment.

Julio, in his way, is also stoic—certainly not a *chillón* (crybaby). His quiet endurance reminded me of the toughest characters created by that supreme storyteller Juan Rulfo (whose stories are collected in *El llano en llamas*, or *The Burning Plain*). Not heroes in the usual sense, these people of the dry, hot Jalisco basin face all sorts of hardship—hunger, illness, drought, deceit and violence both savage and slow. They suffer and don't always triumph, as Julio may not. However, Rulfo's men and women bespeak a greater triumph, one of collective perseverance, built on a bedrock of plain common sense. No illusions and very few dreams.

"In the hospital," Julio said, "I saw others try to kill themselves. I wanted to stop them, but I couldn't. So I yelled and yelled, and the nurse finally came to stop them. One man tried to kill himself twice, one time by hanging himself on some tubes and another time by not using the respirator." Julio paused and shook his head. "Poor guys. They were thinking thoughts they shouldn't think. If you're never going to walk, then you should never think of yourself walking. You have to forget it. I know what happens. You can go crazy thinking about things you can't do."

There's a Mexican saying that goes, "Tell me how you die and I'll tell you who you are." In the United States the emphasis is reversed: "Tell me how you lived and I'll tell you who you are." If Julio sees suicide as a coward's way out, he didn't say, but he was saddened that those men had so little comfort, perhaps so little love, in their lives. He implied that if you face illness, injury and even death courageously, head-on, then you can live or die at peace with yourself and those around you. And you have a sense of wholeness, of pride in your existence.

For too long, Mexico has had the reputation of being obsessed with death—harsh Spanish roots, the exchange of one religion of sacrifice for another, revolutions, bullfights, Days of the Dead. The images trail on in countless stories and films. What is usually overlooked is the equally strong Mexican emphasis on life-giving creative forces. A familiarity with death, as the poet Octavio Paz has said, is the obverse of an obsession with life; they form a duality that should not be torn apart.

Julio hopes to walk again. He told me this directly, without hesitation, as if it could be true, as if someday he would get around to it. But of course it takes money. Right now he is patient. As it is, he doesn't even use his wheelchair, which stands folded up in a corner, a convenient place to hang clothes. The chair, he explained, is too big for the room, too big for the apartment; there's so little space in which to maneuver it.

I have heard people say that the illegal immigrant poor are better off here than they would be in Latin America, that they should be thankful for the privilege and not expect handouts. Generally they are better off in America. What most observers overlook, however, are the psychological trade-offs that immigrants must make.

These people must give up a big part of their culture, their language, their ways of raising children, their sense of time, their sense of pleasure, even their sense of human closeness, human warmth—all sacrificed in the pursuit of survival and success. America exacts its price from these newcomers. A Dominican juice squeezer in a Manhattan health-food takeout restaurant told me he's afraid his children will see the world as one giant, insatiable clock fed by dollar bills.

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"There's got to be more to life than that," he added. A Salvadoran janitor in Washington, D.C., told me that what bothers him most about Americans is their refusal to get involved with people. "They say 'hi' and they smile a lot," he explained, "but their eyes and minds are somewhere else. They keep you at a distance."

In Amparo and Julio's little apartment, in the shadow of towering headquarters of banks and oil companies, I couldn't see that loss of place and culture. It was too subtle. Julio and Amparo weren't about to help me, either, by complaining.

Or, rather, I couldn't see it in them until I had seen it in myself. As a second-generation American, I had learned to run like a clock and say "hi" a lot. I can also shake hands and say goodbye, efficiently, smoothly, eager to return to my less crowded, newer and cleaner world.

But I hadn't figured on that rooster. □

NON-C.P. CANDIDATES

A Choice Not an Echo in Hungary

FRANK LIPSIUS

Under a proposed electoral reform, Hungary would become the first Eastern European country since World War II in which candidates for considerably more than a majority of the seats in a parliamentary election are not chosen by the Communist Party. The "open" election would be held in 1985, and the reform calls for up to 85 percent of the seats in the National Assembly to be contested by two or more candidates. The remaining 15 percent would be reserved for party designees, including First Secretary Janos Kadar. In previous elections, the government has permitted non-party candidates to compete in 39 of the nation's 352 parliamentary districts.

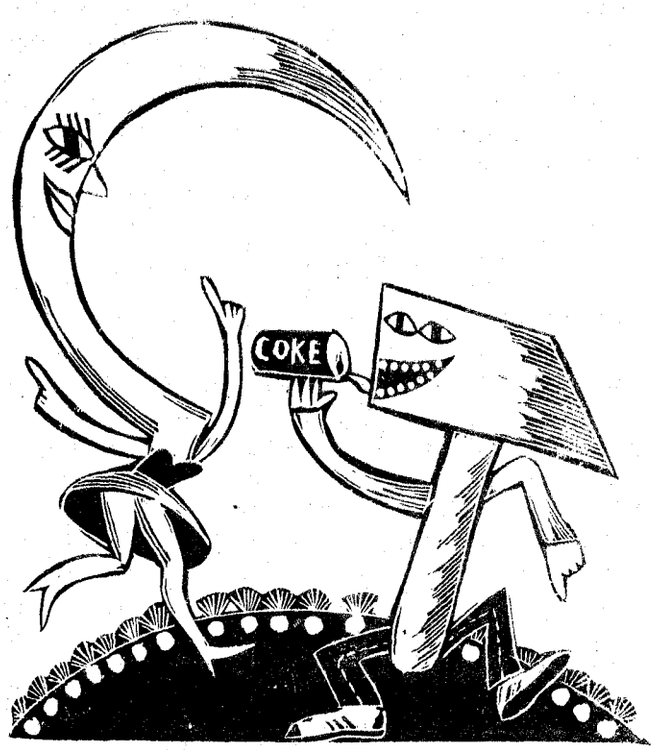
Under the new system, which is being developed by a committee headed by Istvan Huszar, general director of the Hungarian Institute of Social Science Research and a member of the Communist Party's Central Committee, candidates would not have to be approved by the People's Patriotic Front (P.P.F.), an umbrella organization which performs certain political functions for the party. According to Huszar, "If nominating meetings throw up several candidates, the P.P.F. would not put any obstacles in the way of them all running." The P.P.F. comprises virtually every interest group and association in the country, including those representing plant managers, farmers, consumers and workers. Those groups could choose their own candidates, who, if elected, would presumably represent their interests.

The reform would not permit the existence of competing ideological parties like those in Western Europe, but it would transform the Communist Party into a coalition of interest groups resembling the Democratic or Republican Parties in the United States. The significance of such an arrangement was described two centuries ago by James Madison in Federalist Paper No. 51, in which he argued that a just society would be best achieved "by comprehending in the society so many separate descriptions of citizens, as will render an unjust combination of a majority of the whole very improbable, if not impracticable."

The new system simply recognizes the social changes wrought by the reforms begun under the New Economic Mechanism of 1968. According to Rezsö Nyers, the "father" of those reforms and now a member of the National Assembly, "The style of the Kadar leadership has been to consult constantly and not to throw its weight around. But it is clear, for the future, that we have to institutionalize this style. The style is not enough." Or, as a Hungarian banker put it, "The party is becoming a clearinghouse of interests and ideas."

Just as economic decentralization brought about the legitimization of interests distinct from the state's and the party's, the proposed electoral reform would give them political recognition. Trade unions already negotiate with the government for better pay and working conditions, and the Chamber of Commerce performs similar services for its members—boosting the profit-sharing bonuses managers of government-owned industries receive, for example. Rural councils represent the peasants, and a shop stewards' organization has the power to call strikes in factories whose managers refuse to improve working conditions. In 1981, its first year of existence, the stewards' group forced the firings of a dozen managers for that reason.

Hungary's leaders have always placed the country's economic interests above party policies. Now Kadar is decen-



Frank Lipsius is a correspondent for the Financial Times of London.

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tralizing the party as he decentralized the economy. Today, the Hungarian Communist Party's only resemblance to those in other Eastern bloc countries is its Marxist rhetoric. And that serves mainly as a smoke screen to conceal the nation's moves toward increased trade and closer economic ties with the West:

§ In May 1982, Hungary became a member of the International Monetary Fund, the first Communist nation to do so with Soviet approval since Stalin ordered the satellites to refuse Marshall Plan aid and I.M.F. membership thirty-five years ago.

§ Hungary's trade with the West is on a par with its trade with the Soviet Union and the other members of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon), the Eastern European common market.

§ A blue-jean factory in Hungary—a joint venture of the government and the Levi-Strauss Company—turns out a million pairs of jeans a year.

§ Western and Japanese banks jointly own a two-thirds share in Hungary's state investment bank.

§ There are more than 12,000 privately owned businesses in Hungary (including a computer manufacturer).

§ The country has a capitalist millionaire in Ernö Rubik, inventor of the famous cube. The puzzles are manufactured by a privately held company in Budapest and its licensees overseas.

§ A Western-style consumer society is thriving—for better or for worse. "A young man in Hungary," the editor of a Budapest magazine told me, "wants his Coca-Cola, his disco and his Adidas. He doesn't care about politics. He lives like a Westerner."

In the past, Hungary's reforms were made without fanfare, so as to neither incite Moscow nor excite Washington. For years, officials begged Western journalists not to stress the contrasts between Hungary and the Soviet Union. To do so, they believed, might encourage a Russian crackdown.

Now they are braver. The decision to join the I.M.F.—perhaps the boldest diplomatic initiative by an Eastern bloc nation since World War II that was not squelched by Moscow—showed that Hungary is confident enough to go public with its policies. Hungarians have openly criticized Soviet trading practices with other Comecon nations. And the critics are not lonely dissidents—they are high-ranking economists, a profession that enjoys great prestige in Hungarian society. A state banker supervised the negotiations with the I.M.F., which resulted in a virtual declaration of economic independence from Comecon.

On their part, Soviet leaders have not opposed Hungary's reforms, which have been radical only in ways that do not offend the Kremlin. In the early days of the New Economic Mechanism, the Hungarians assumed the Russians did not fully understand what was going on in Budapest. A member of the Hungarian delegation that went to Moscow in 1968 to win approval for the N.E.M. told me that bewildered Soviet economists asked him, "But if you let factory managers decide production quotas, how will they know what to do?"

Now, however, the changes have gone too far for the Russians to be unaware of them. One of Yuri Andropov's first acts as Soviet leader was to establish a think tank to study the economic successes of the Eastern bloc countries, particularly Hungary. A good case can be made for the proposition that the Russians would like their satellites to be more autonomous and therefore less dependent on Soviet oil and raw materials.

Hungary's liberalization is a personal triumph for Janos Kadar, who was considered a traitor by many Hungarians because he was installed by the Russians after they suppressed the 1956 uprising. Now, he is the only official in the Communist bloc who could win a free election. He has proved that reform buys popularity, and has made Hungary an attractive alternative to the repressive Soviet model.

The proposed electoral reform is an important step toward democracy. Without eliminating the dominant role of the Communist Party, Kadar has forced it to be responsive to the people. With any luck, his successors will not renege on the economic and political reforms that have slowly but surely been achieved over the past quarter-century. □

TRANSPORTING 'SPENT FUEL'

Nuclear Danger On the Highways

FRED C. SHAPIRO

Of all the nuclear misnomers, the most deceptive is "spent fuel," the term applied to irradiated uranium removed from reactors. Far from being spent in the sense of a bullet, say, once the force propelling it has been dissipated, nuclear fuel that has been in a reactor more than three years is more radioactive than anything else on earth. (In fact, a principal reason for its removal from the reactor is that it has become *too* radioactive.) The spent-fuel assemblies must be unloaded from the reactor and placed in racks under at least fourteen feet of continually recycled and cooled water in "swimming pools" adjacent to the plant.

The question is what to do with them after that. In the 1960s, nuclear plants were designed on the assumption that after six months or so in the pool, the spent-fuel assemblies would be shipped to "reprocessing" plants, where they would be chemically treated to reclaim the unfissioned uranium. That would then be returned to the reactors.

The key word there is "shipped." This isn't the kind of stuff that can go parcel post. The fissioning process inside a reactor creates plutonium and the other raw materials of nuclear weapons; even after an unshielded assembly has been out of a reactor for a year, its temperature exceeds 800 degrees Fahrenheit and it is capable of delivering a lethal dose

Fred C. Shapiro is a staff writer for The New Yorker *and the author of* Radwaste: A Reporter's Investigation of a Growing Nuclear Menace *(Random House).*

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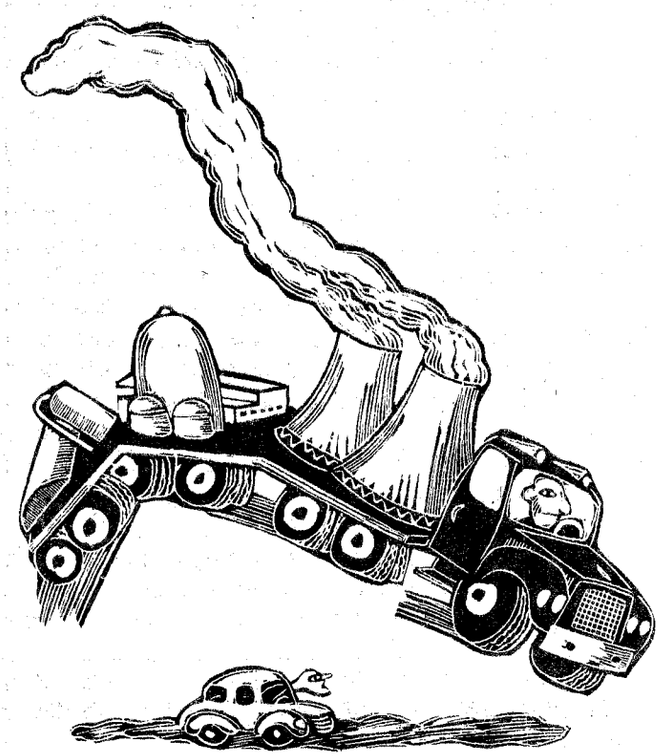
of radiation within a radius of three feet in less than ten seconds. The contractor chosen by the old Atomic Energy Commission to work out most of the packaging and transport safeguards for spent fuel was Sandia National Laboratories in New Mexico, and well over a decade ago it developed shielding and strength specifications for twenty-two-ton water- or helium-cooled casks that could be carried on the highways by trailers, and for eighty-seven-ton casks that could be shipped by rail.

Although more were licensed by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, only eleven such casks were put into use on American highways; only four were ever transported by rail. And rather than moving spent fuel from commercial reactors, the purpose for which they were designed, they are used mostly to transport wastes generated by government-owned research facilities, and by foreign reactors participating in the Atoms for Peace program, to Federal reprocessing facilities in Washington State, South Carolina and Idaho.

What has kept the uranium off the streets is the realization, even within the nuclear power industry, that reprocessing is both environmentally dangerous and financially burdensome. The only American commercial plant ever to do this work, at West Valley, New York, a village about thirty miles southeast of Buffalo, shut down in 1972 after six unprofitable years, and its successor, at Barnwell, South Carolina, stands at least a billion dollars from completion. When the plant goes into operation, it will function under a considerable handicap: freshly mined uranium now sells for 23 cents per pound, which is far less than the cost of reprocessing.

For almost twenty years, spent fuel has had no place to go—afflicting the nuclear power industry with something akin to industrial constipation. Fifty-nine of the swimming pools at America's seventy-three operating commercial reactors have already been expanded—in some cases twice—and several have been "reracked" with neutron-absorbing boron frames, which permit the assemblies to be stored closer together without running the risk of initiating a self-sustaining nuclear reaction. Despite those alterations, half a dozen pools will be filled by 1986, and twenty-eight more will reach capacity by 1990.



What the nuclear utility operators would like, understandably, is to get this dangerous and now valueless uranium off their hands, to pack it into spent-fuel casks and ship it to an Away From Reactor (A.F.R.) holding pool that the Federal government would operate until it is able to foist a spent-fuel repository on some unwilling state.

But even if an A.F.R. is built, the first repository will not open until 1996, by the most optimistic estimate. The Department of Energy has notified six states that they are "candidate hosts" for the facility, but the deadline for choosing the first site is in 1985, and the decision can be overturned by either house of Congress. There is also the problem of transporting the spent fuel twice—first to the A.F.R. and then to the repository when it is built. A 1981 report of the National Academy of Sciences' National Research Council estimates that by the year 2000, if all goes according to the government's plan, and assuming that future shipments are all made by truck, 120 loaded spent-fuel casks will be in transit on America's highways each day. And each will be, in the language of a 1976 report of the British Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution, "in effect a small-scale nuclear installation, with fuel, moderator and coolant."

Well, so what? Why make a big deal about peripatetic reactors? Aren't toxic and hazardous cargoes being shipped on our highways now? And hasn't the government been hauling irradiated uranium around for more than forty years without hurting anyone—radioactively, anyway? A report issued this year by the environmentally oriented Council on Economic Priorities concedes that "there has never been a large enough release of radioactivity from a shipping cask to seriously affect the public."

However, the report, "The Next Nuclear Gamble: Transportation and Storage of Nuclear Waste," goes on to establish that there is a good chance accidents will occur—with disastrous consequences—when spent-fuel casks start rolling to an A.F.R. or a repository. Its author, Marvin Resnikoff, an antinuclear nuclear physicist affiliated with the Sierra Club's Radioactive Waste Campaign, began by examining Sandia's tests in 1977 and 1978 of the casks constructed according to its specifications.

Those tests were filmed (in color), and a short edited print, entitled *Accident Safe*, is still being shown by pronuclear organizations to persuade the public that the casks are safe. The version I saw several years ago is extremely persuasive. Casks on sleds are rammed into concrete walls, struck by locomotives at speeds of up to 84 miles per hour and scorched by burning jet fuel. Invariably, they emerge from these ordeals scratched and charred but structurally intact.

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However, as the council's researchers found, the tests were as rigged as any Hollywood stunt. To begin with, the casks tested in the film are not the same as those now in use, which have never been tested. The casks in the film were loaded with nonirradiated assemblies—which is unrealistic, since the heat from spent fuel builds up pressure inside a cask, making it more vulnerable to fire and external impact. The impact tests were designed to deliver maximum force to the strongest parts of the casks—at other angles, according to Resnikoff, a crash at only 12.5 miles per hour might cause a release of radioactivity. And as to the fire ordeal, ten minutes after Sandia turned off its cameras, the exterior of one test cask did crack, and some of its lead shielding subsequently vaporized.

Even more disturbing are the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's "incident" reports on the casks now in use. According to one report, in 1981 the surface of a cask transferring partially irradiated fuel from a holding pool in Illinois to the La Crosse reactor in Wisconsin was found upon arrival to be emitting ninety times the legal amount of radiation. It's anybody's guess how many fellow travelers on the two states' highways were exposed to it. In any event, to hold down the dosage on the return trip, N.R.C. technicians merely wrapped the contaminated cask in plastic.

In several instances, the problem has proved to be beyond a quick fix with a large Baggie, or even with copper plates welded to the outside of a cask to make up for insufficient interior shielding. After 1979, four of the eleven highway casks were ordered off the roads by the N.R.C. after the pressure created by the decay heat bowed their interior shells. The question that arises, of course, is what would happen if, despite Sandia's reassurances to the contrary, a weakened cask was involved in a traffic accident and breached? In 1980, the N.R.C. estimated that there might be 2,492 immediate deaths and many more cases of cancer should such a calamity occur at lunch hour in downtown Manhattan.

This worst-case scenario lends weight to New York City's defense in Federal court of a 1976 ordinance barring shipments of spent fuel and other radioactive materials from its streets, a prohibition that has been copied, so far, by more than 200 other localities. A little over a year ago, District Court Judge Abraham Sofaer sided with the city and against the Federal Department of Transportation in part "because DOT failed adequately to consider the risks of transporting large-quantity radioactive materials by truck through densely populated areas."

Whether or not that decision stands up under appeal, researchers at the Council on Economic Priorities have offered an alternative to transporting spent fuel, which goes beyond knee-jerk environmentalist demands to shut down nuclear plants. At reactors in West Germany, they point out, spent fuel is held indefinitely in nodular cast-iron (or CASTOR) casks that weigh up to 120 metric tons each and provide more shielding than the spent-fuel casks used in the United States (the German casks are reported to be strong enough to "withstand the assaults of a missile test"). In this country, up to nine assemblies could be stored in the largest of these casks and kept in dry containment at the plant until a repository is built; the assemblies could then be shipped in the CASTOR casks.

There are drawbacks to this idea, and the study cites several of them. The area in which the casks are stored would have to be adequately ventilated, and heavy-duty cranes would be required since the CASTOR casks weigh too much to be handled by the equipment now available. Additionally, because these casks are larger, it may be necessary to load spent-fuel assemblies under less than the fourteen feet of water engineers now require for safety. There may be other arguments against dry on-site storage of spent fuel (I imagine Sandia's engineers will come up with a few), but from now on, it should take more than a technicolor film to persuade Americans of the safety of—and the need for—reactors rolling down their streets. □

WAITING FOR THE NEXT WAR

The Sands Run Out in Lebanon

YAHYA SADOWSKI

It was always a mistake to regard the negotiations between Lebanon and Israel as merely the termination of Israel's 1982 invasion, the fifth Arab-Israeli war. The negotiations, directed in their final phase by U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz, were also the prelude to the sixth Arab-Israeli war: the coming Israeli drive to complete the eviction of the Syrians and Palestinians from Lebanon. Despite the heated rhetoric and ominous troop movements on both sides, this war will probably not happen soon. But unless there is a major realignment of forces in the region, it will become increasingly likely over the next few months.

The seeds of the coming war were planted by Israel's failure to achieve all its goals in last year's fighting. Although the invasion was a military victory, with few casualties on the Israeli side, it was a political fiasco. The actual fighting cost Israel a billion dollars, and a year of occupation has more than doubled that bill. The war was a propaganda disaster, making Israel a pariah in the eyes of much of the world and undermining its relations with the United States. The campaign touched off an acrimonious debate in Israel, and may have buried forever the nation's tradition of closing ranks in time of war. However, from Tel Aviv's perspective, the worst feature of the invasion was the fact that it did not achieve the Begin government's strategic objectives.

Foremost among them was the destruction of the Palestine Liberation Organization, which Begin believed would put an end to Palestinian demands for an independent state. But the P.L.O. was not destroyed—indeed, its international

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prestige rose during the arduous battle of Beirut. It was deprived of bases in southern Lebanon, but that may not be a serious blow to an organization which abandoned hopes of overcoming Israel by force of arms several years ago in favor of diplomatic tactics. In any case, P.L.O. troops still operate from eastern Lebanon, and they have grown in number and potency—and also in belligerence, as the recent mutinies against Yasir Arafat demonstrate.

Begin also hoped the invasion would "liberate Lebanon" by cementing Israel's alliance with Phalangist and Shiite militias, laying the groundwork for a strong Maronite Christian-dominated government in Beirut and bringing to power leaders who would be eager to sign treaties with Israel. Those plans went awry in the first weeks of the invasion. The Shiite militias either fled or fought alongside the Palestinians, and the Phalange remained in its barracks until Israel had completed the painful task of subduing Beirut. The one Lebanese leader with sufficient following to impose his own *diktat* on the state, President-elect Bashir Gemayel, was assassinated nine days before taking office. The current Lebanese government is not strong enough to control the rival militias, much less sign treaties with Israel and police their common border.

Another fundamental objective of the invasion was to draw international attention away from Israel's creeping annexation of the West Bank, and thereby alter the agenda of any future peace negotiations. Israel knew last May that both the Reagan Administration and the P.L.O. were drafting new diplomatic initiatives based on the idea of "land for peace": Israel would give up the West Bank in exchange for P.L.O. recognition of its right to exist. Here too the invasion did not achieve its purpose. It succeeded in derailing the P.L.O. initiative, but the American program—the much touted "Reagan Plan"—was unveiled on September 1. Embarrassed by television coverage of the brutal bombing of Beirut and shocked by the massacres at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps, the Reagan Administration insisted that negotiations over Lebanon should not delay efforts to achieve a broader peace, and placed the West Bank at the top of its agenda.

In light of its strategic failure, Israel has been forced to occupy Lebanon for a far longer time than it anticipated. The occupation sabotaged the credibility of the Reagan initiative, and it gave Israel the opportunity to frustrate and humiliate the P.L.O. by intimidating and displacing Palestinian civilians in Lebanon. Israel kept the Lebanese government weak and pliable by arming local militias and fostering rivalries among them. Maj. Saad Haddad was installed by Israel as head of a de facto government in southern Lebanon, and his forces were augmented by several Israeli-organized militias, including one made up of renegade Palestinians. The objective of these moves was to partition Lebanon, thereby balancing Israeli domination of the south against Syrian control of the east. Partition would create three layers of control (Syrian, Lebanese and Israeli), thus buffering the Galilee from attack by the remaining P.L.O. units in the north. It was with this goal in mind that Israel proposed a unilateral withdrawal of its troops in Lebanon to the Awali River, about twenty-five miles south of Beirut.

However, even that position proved difficult for Israel to establish. It was unacceptable to the Lebanese government and, more important, to the Reagan Administration. Even before Secretary Shultz entered the negotiations, Washington's decision to delay delivery of seventy-five F-16 jets showed its determination to prevent partition. Furthermore, the Israeli occupation of "pacified" southern Lebanon has been more expensive than expected. Sniper attacks and ambushes by small units of Palestinians and Lebanese have killed or wounded nearly as many Israelis as the invasion did. As the people of Israel became familiar with the treason, revenge and murder that lie at the heart of Lebanese politics, their demand for total withdrawal grew.

It was in this context that Secretary Shultz announced the Israeli-Lebanese agreement on evacuation of Israeli troops last month. The mounting opposition in Israel to the occupation forced the Begin government to reduce its conditions for withdrawal; it finally agreed to a formula that allowed Israel to maintain only a single platoon of troops in Lebanon to "supervise security arrangements." The status of its surrogate, Major Haddad, was left ambiguous. The opposition Labor Party was quick to charge that the formula was a "certificate of failure," and that the invasion of Lebanon had produced no benefits commensurate with Israeli sacrifices. Begin's popularity in Israel plunged.

But the Shultz formula did not set the wheels of an Israeli evacuation in motion, because Israel will not withdraw its troops unless Syria and the P.L.O. agree to the simultaneous withdrawal of their forces in Lebanon. And that agreement will not be easy to bring off.

Despite Syria's prompt rejection of the Shultz formula, President Hafez al-Assad is eager to negotiate. He is even more familiar than the Israelis with the costs of occupying Lebanon. Indeed, Syria was engaged in a gradual withdrawal of its troops at the time of the Israeli invasion. The Syrian leader knows that his forces now eyeballing the Israelis in the Bekaa Valley could not block a determined assault on Damascus, and he has better uses for them elsewhere—along Syria's borders with Iraq and Jordan, for example, or even on the Golan Heights. Above all, Assad now sees the Syrian presence in Lebanon as a bargaining chip in future negotiations with the Americans. His highest ambitions are to supplant King Hussein as the central Arab actor in Middle East peace negotiations and to improve Syria's chances of regaining the Golan Heights. The idea of Assad as a peacemaker may seem laughable to Americans familiar with newspaper stories of Syrian radicalism and dogmatism; but sources close to him insist that his objection to peace talks in the past was based on his fear that they would strengthen his Arab opponents and ignore Syria's territorial claims, rather than on any hostility toward America or Israel.

Of course, Assad will have to drive a hard bargain to attain any of his goals. He will probably refuse to withdraw his troops until he has strong assurances from Israel that it will not launch future assaults on Syria from the Bekaa Valley, and from the United States that its peace moves will

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be responsive to Syrian claims. It is a dangerous game, but he is in a good position to play it.

The Israeli invasion had the unexpected effect of enhancing Syria's stature in the Arab world. Domestic dissent in Syria predictably evaporated in the face of the threat from Israel. The P.L.O.'s leaders, whose families and headquarters are now located in Damascus, share common strategic objectives with the Assad regime, and they scarcely hesitated before throwing their support to the Syrians after the invasion. Egypt and Saudi Arabia, Syria's rivals, were discredited among other Arab nations because of their failure to persuade the United States to halt the Israeli invasion. The Soviet Union, looking for a way to capitalize on America's damaged image in the eyes of many Arabs, made Syria a showcase of the benefits of Russian support. Moscow has sent Syria $2 billion in arms, which have not only replaced its losses from the war but upgraded its air defenses, communications systems and firepower. Assad has successfully glossed over his failure to order sustained resistance to the Israeli invasion and his quick acceptance of a cease-fire. Instead, he proclaims that Syria was the only country to fight at the side of the Palestinians and, quite correctly, cites the courage and effectiveness of the Syrian units that had to battle their way out of Lebanon.

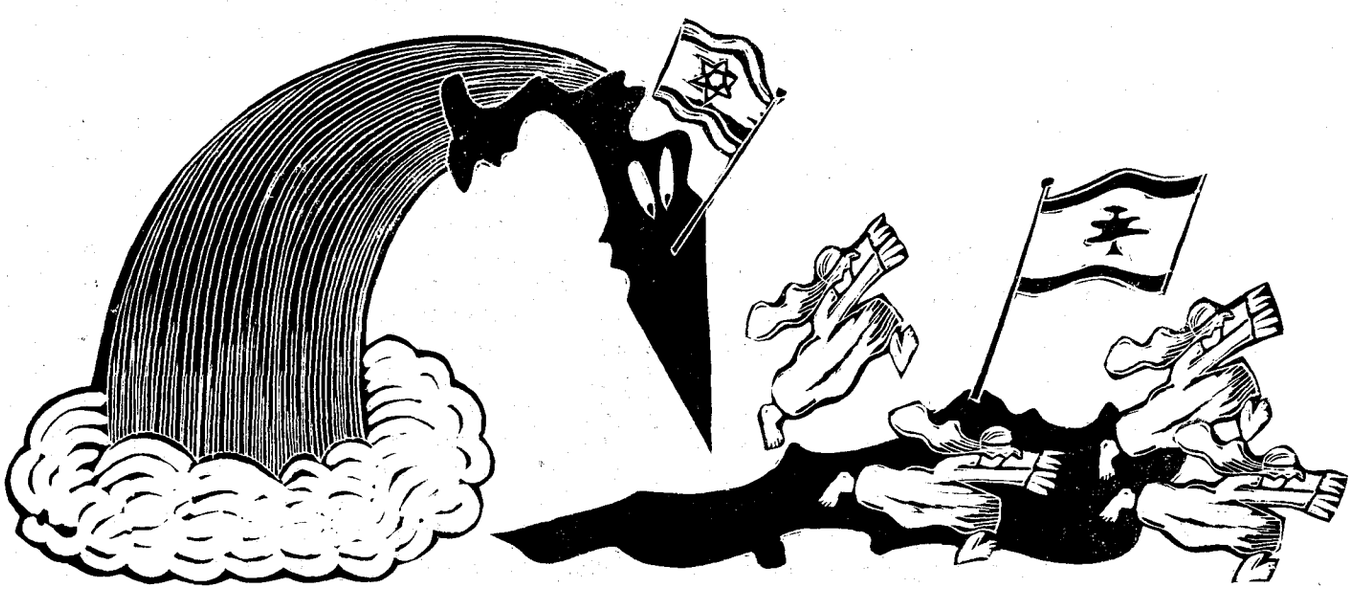
Syria's sudden prominence in the Middle East peace process places America, not to say Israel, in an uncomfortable position. Shultz isn't the first American official who would have preferred to avoid dealing with Damascus. Henry Kissinger would not have negotiated the 1974 Israeli-Syrian truce if King Faisal of Saudi Arabia had not threatened him with a renewal of the oil embargo. When Assad's brother Rifaat came to Washington last summer in an attempt to win assurances that Israel would not assault Syrian positions in the Bekaa Valley, he was virtually ignored by the Administration. The United States has long regarded Assad as too radical and too closely aligned with the Soviet Union for negotiations with him to be of much value. In any case, Israel is unlikely to relinquish the Golan Heights, making negotiations futile. Washington's indifference to Syria was reaffirmed recently when Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger dismissed it as "a Soviet puppet."

If bargaining with Syria is unappealing to the United States, it is anathema to Israel. Neither country wants to see Syria gain anything from the current impasse, and yet neither country can wait too long for progress in the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon. Begin doesn't want to hold elections until Israel has extricated itself from the Lebanon quagmire, and Reagan knows that when the Presidential campaign starts this summer, his hands will be tied in the Middle East. So both Washington and Tel Aviv are searching for a way to break the deadlock in Lebanon without conceding anything to the Syrians.

The solution for Israel is as obvious as it is cruel: launch another war. Even the Syrians have no doubts about Israel's capacity to evict them from Lebanon. So long as any war is confined to the Bekaa Valley, it is unlikely either to be extensively covered by U.S. television or to provoke a major Soviet response. For Begin, a war would offer a chance to decimate the remaining P.L.O. units and cut the Syrians down to size. For Reagan, it would provide an opportunity to take credit for the evacuation of Israeli troops from Lebanon (after the war, of course), and it would "liberate" King Hussein and the Saudis from P.L.O.-Syrian pressures.

Such a war would be a costly affair. And it would not be easy to drum up support in Israel for another aggressive, politically motivated assault. Syria now has nearly twice as many troops in Lebanon as it had there last summer; they are better equipped as well. If last summer's engagements are any indication, Israel will pay a stiff price for its victory. Washington cannot afford to publicly back such an attack, but it can accept the fruits of it. Most Americans will say—with some justification—that Syria was asking for it. Given the current pressure-cooker atmosphere, it may not be long before Washington flashes the infamous "yellow light—proceed with caution" that launched Israel into Lebanon last year.

No war is inevitable, and this one may yet be avoided by Syrian flexibility, Israeli restraint or American prudence.



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But if the tanks roll again this summer, few will be surprised. Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens has already announced that war with Syria may be necessary to "secure the peace" in Lebanon. The Syrians have been convinced of the danger of an attack for months, and they have watched the Israelis build three new airfields and a port in Lebanon to facilitate troop movements. The Russians made their views on the likelihood of war clear recently when they evacuated the dependents of their diplomats in Damascus, Beirut and Amman. Several weeks ago, State Department officials began to mumble that if the Syrians don't leave Lebanon "in an orderly manner . . . they will be carried out in Red Cross ambulances." Anyone planning to visit Lebanon this summer had better take a flak jacket. □

The P.L.O.

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

recognition, a process that would be encouraged by the "joint action" of Israelis, Palestinians and those sympathetic to the national existence of both. At the time of his death, Dr. Sartawi was working with his Israeli colleagues, Maj. Gen. Matti Peled and Uri Avneri, to bring this idea to fruition.

Their efforts had a common theme—that there is no possibility of military victory for either Israel or the P.L.O. The choice is clear: "mutual recognition or mutual annihilation." For years, Dr. Sartawi, Peled and Avneri were lonely figures in their respective political cultures. Yet, with each new turn of the screw of violence, increasing numbers of people on both sides began listening to them.

During the past several months, I met with Dr. Sartawi a number of times, in Paris and in London. Our last talk took place in London, a month before his death. After spending the afternoon together, we proceeded to a meeting at which he was the featured speaker. What follows is a transcript of his remarks that evening, adapted for publication. It was his last major public statement. Issam Sartawi, who leaves a wife and three children, will be remembered for his vision and for the courage with which he tried to lead his people—and the Israelis too—out of their terrible predicament.

Today, there are three plans for peace in the Middle East. The first one, that of the Israeli government, calls for the elimination of the Palestine Liberation Organization. That objective was used by the Begin government to justify its incursion into Lebanon: it was a "war for peace." The Israelis said that once the P.L.O. was wiped out, peace would follow.

A second, diametrically opposed plan has been offered by the P.L.O. and has the backing of the Arab world. It calls for recognition of the P.L.O. by other states and for its participation in peace negotiations as the representative of the Palestinian people.

Somewhere between those mutually exclusive formulas there is a third approach, that of the Western nations. Their leaders advocate bypassing the P.L.O. but not eliminating it.

Those who seriously want peace in the Middle East must take one of these three plans as a starting point. But which should be chosen?

The first (which, understandably, I oppose) means the destruction of the P.L.O. The planners of Israel's invasion of Lebanon believed that if the P.L.O. bases there were eliminated, the organization would be finished. They were wrong. The P.L.O. survived the defeat and transferred its operations to other countries. If the elimination formula is carried to its logical conclusion, Israel must pursue the P.L.O. in its current refuges.

One thing can be said for the advocates of this formula: they recognize that there *is* a Palestinian problem. They propose the establishment of a Palestinian state in Jordan. When Israelis like former Minister of Defense Ariel Sharon call for that, they do not necessarily mean *all* of Jordan. Rather, their statements suggest that only the central and southern parts would be involved.

On the other hand, the P.L.O. and the Arab countries say the Palestinian state should be located in mandatory Palestine. Although no specific territory has been proposed, one gathers from statements by Palestinian and Arab leaders that they mean the West Bank and Gaza.

There are a number of obstacles to the success of that formula. Not least among them is the unequal bargaining power of the two sides—the Palestinians and the Israelis. There must be equilibrium and equality between the parties. But the Palestinian side is weaker, and the cards are now stacked in Israel's favor.

Then how does one go about translating the vision of a Palestinian state into a reality? Obviously, international support is crucial, and it must come from the West. That is, from the United States, from Western Europe and also from Israelis who believe that creating a Palestinian state is the only valid and viable solution to the Middle East problem. I should point out that the formula that calls for eliminating the P.L.O. is the position of the Israeli *government*. It is not the universal Israeli solution. The Labor Party does not advocate it, nor do the various groups in the peace camp.

As I said, Western European and American help is needed to bring about the two-state solution. I must emphasize that the United States and Europe now take a neutral position. They support neither the elimination of the P.L.O. nor its incorporation into the peace process. I think this neutrality provides an opening for progress. One has to assume that the P.L.O. and Israel are incapable of budging from their entrenched positions.

Nonetheless, one must choose between the three plans, and I believe the Palestinian state solution is the only one that will insure justice for all parties and bring an end to the mutual destruction, or what I call, from my political vantage point, the "ongoing fratricide" in the Middle East. To achieve that objective, it is necessary to accept the P.L.O. as an equal negotiating partner in the peace process. If all nations involved agreed to that proposition, progress would be assured.

The Western powers have not been totally blind to the im-

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portance of bringing in the P.L.O. In fact, they have set certain conditions for recognizing it. Foremost among those conditions are P.L.O. acceptance of Israel's right to exist and endorsement of U.N. Resolution 242.

That idea was first proposed by Secretary of State Kissinger in 1975, during the talks leading up to the Sinai Force Separation Agreement, and it has been backed by succeeding American administrations. It has also been adopted by most Western European powers—not in so many words, but in the sense that it has become the basis of their Middle East policies. Indeed, one might ask, if American and European support is so crucial to the peace process, why does the P.L.O. not see to it that the conditions are met? Or, as Assistant Secretary of State for Near East and South Asian Affairs Nicholas Veliotis put it recently, that the "invitation" is accepted.

There are problems—psychological, internecine, inter-Arab—that have made it hard for the P.L.O. to deal directly with this critical issue. Yet if we look carefully at the resolutions passed by the Palestine National Council over the years, we find that the P.L.O. has provided evidence of its willingness to accept the reality of the state of Israel. Those resolutions go back as far as 1974. In April 1981, the council, meeting in Damascus, approved the Brezhnev plan for peace in the Middle East. In that plan there is a paragraph that explicitly guarantees the right of all states in the region, including Israel, to live in peace and security as sovereign nations. That formulation was again endorsed at the most recent meeting of the council, in Algiers.

Those resolutions appear to satisfy the demands of the West. But, curiously, the P.L.O. has never formally said, "We have agreed to those conditions, so please recognize us." Even more curiously, the West has not bothered to notice that the P.L.O. has met its demands. For me this is heartbreaking. In fact, it is part of my political burden. It is the cross I carry. I keep rushing between Western European and American leaders and Palestinian leaders, trying to understand why those in the West refuse to accept the fact that recognition of Israel has been offered, and why the Palestinians refuse to explicitly announce it and demand the price for it.

There is no other way to break the present dangerous impasse. The P.L.O. must be recognized. The strategy of eliminating the Palestinian problem by eliminating the P.L.O. (and the sovereign state of Jordan as well) is the wrong one. No matter how deeply Reagan, Sharon and others believe it will work, it will not. It is a sure way to mutual destruction, a destruction which might well spread to the West.

There are difficulties, to be sure—in the West and within the Palestinian movement. But you can help us by making clear to others in the West that the P.L.O. has indeed fulfilled the conditions for being accepted and recognized. Tell them that no more authoritative statements can be made than those of the Palestine National Council. I have tried to explain that to European and American officials, but they tell me, "We read the resolutions. We know that your National Council has passed them. But we would like to hear the words from chairman Arafat himself." I say, "Why? Chairman Arafat, our dearly beloved leader, is not the head of the council. He is the leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization, a modern political body with modern political institutions. The ultimate authority rests with the Palestine National Council. A resolution of the council means more than any statement of his."

All my arguments have been in vain. Perhaps there was good reason to reject them. But unless those problems are overcome—the reluctance on the part of Europe and the United States to acknowledge that the necessary conditions have been met, and the reluctance on the part of the P.L.O. to state clearly that agreement on recognition exists—there can be no progress. Maybe I am being romantic. Maybe I am dreaming. But isn't it possible for the West to wake up and admit that the P.L.O. has gained the right to become a full-fledged partner in the peace process?

If men and women of good will press their governments to accept the reality of the P.L.O.'s recognition of Israel, progress toward peace can be made. I hope that somehow this can be done. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

My Dinner With Aileen

LEON FINK

THE RADICAL PERSUASION, 1890–1917: Aspects of the Intellectual History and the Historiography of Three American Radical Organizations. *By Aileen S. Kraditor. Louisiana State University Press. 381 pp. $37.50. Paper $12.95.*

What happens when a gifted historian of dissenting social movements reverses her political commitments and decides that the old solution is really part of the problem and that the old problem is really no problem at all? What happens is Aileen S. Kraditor's *The Radical Persuasion, 1890–1917*, perhaps the most ambitious historiographical product of present-day neoconservatism. Following her enduring intellectual portraits of nineteenth-century abolitionism and of turn-of-the-century women's suffrage campaigns, Kraditor set out in 1968 to investigate the theoretical underpinnings of the Socialist Labor Party (S.L.P.), the Socialist Party of America (S.P.) and the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.). But by the mid-1970s, Kraditor had soured on political convictions originally nurtured in the old left—as well as on the professional company of other radical historians. Her book is an indictment both of the early American socialist movement and of historians inclined to lend credence to its ideals.

The core of Kraditor's critique is that the radicals' world view had little to do with American realities and even less to do with workers' views of those realities. Rather, the socialist vision reflected the needs of a tiny alienated minority, an intellectual flotsam and jetsam manufacturing an idea system that gave their own fractured world a fantasy coherence. Painting John Q. Worker (Kraditor's composite) in their own image, "they offered him a solution to a problem he did not have; they had to make him feel alienated and *then* offer him their movement as the cure for his condition. But, not having the disease, he did not need the medicine."

With a flick of the wrist, Kraditor dispatches the standard explanations for the socialists' failure in America. That repression, for example, helped do in the first generation of American socialists Kraditor rejects as casuistry: it is circular reasoning to posit an antagonistic social system and then cite the predictable response of the rulers as a force interrupting the radical march of history. (Anyway, Kraditor insists, repression was far less common than governmental tolerance or indifference.) Another common argument—that radicals simply adopted the wrong strategy—is also quickly dispensed with: the S.P., S.L.P. and I.W.W. had very different approaches and methods but they all ended up in the same boat, as failures. But what about the socialists' sometimes considerable impact on reform ideas and reform legislation? Since radicals by definition believed that progress could come only with a basic alteration in political or economic structures, the enactment of reforms *refuted* rather than validated radical claims. "The success of the movement itself should be measured by its own criterion," argues Kraditor, and by that yardstick it was a washout. The reason, according to Kraditor, is simple: workers ignored the radicals' message because it was unconvincing.

Socialist illusions about, and therefore distance from, their would-be recruits in the working class have effectively been masked by the biases of radical historians. Old left historians focused on radical organizations and leadership as if they represented genuine "working-class" social forms: John Q. Worker became a faceless proletarian who simply needed to recognize his proper class interests. New Left historians shifted the halo from the leadership to the rank and file: at moments of crisis, spontaneously democratic activity somehow sprang forth from an innately anticapitalistic workers' culture. To both groups, notes Kraditor, workers' lives possessed little meaning except in relation to capitalist power structures.

The staying power of the capitalist system, hard to fathom using the first two approaches, was the point of departure for a third and more sophisticated Marxism, which presented itself in the late 1960s. Derived from Antonio Gramsci (Kraditor jokes in a footnote that she has had "nightmares about colleges offering majors and degrees in Gramsci Studies"), hegemony theory posited a "totalizing" cultural system. Such an analysis, which Kraditor herself adopted for a time via the work of Eugene Genovese, did avoid the contradiction of classical left history, wherein on the one hand the ruling class is all-powerful and on the other hand "American history is the history of the workers' continual struggles for freedom (see almost every book written by Herbert Aptheker and Philip Foner)." Yet, on reflection, the notion of hegemony proved an even more arbitrary explanation of American life than that of class struggle. "How disguised," Kraditor asks, "can a class's rule throughout the society be and still be that class's rule throughout the society?"

Kraditor's growing doubts about the assumptions of systematic Marxism led her to embrace the "new social history" of the early 1970s, with its interest in the lives and belief systems of non-elites. Her reading of this work convinced her that American workers lived in a world of "partial autonomy" in which ethnicity, religion, and community and kinship networks took precedence over class relationships. Kraditor therefore proposes to discard the concept of "system for that of a Society," "with 'social space' that allowed a variety of institutions, lifestyles, values, aspirations, and beliefs to exist independently of the interests and needs of the rulers of the economy."

Once liberated from the impediments of radical theory, Kraditor can move back to the subject at hand, the radicals themselves. With few exceptions Kraditor finds them guilty of economic determinism, psychological environmentalism, scientism, vanguardism, sectarianism, prophecy and "essentialism," which she defines as "the practice . . . of interpreting a particular institution and the behavior of its members . . . in terms of their 'essence' as set forth in the theory, rather than in terms of its actual operation and motives of the members." The system-thinking of the socialists also led them to subordinate issues of racial and sexual equality to

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the issue of class oppression. Kraditor finds socialist literature filled with unconscious derogation of women, as in Wobbly J.S. Biscay's put-down of the "effeminate" Prof. Frank Bohn: "We developed our muscles by juggling railroad ties, playing with steel rails, transporting the means of life and doing the work of the world. . . . Peddle your funny stories to the bourgeois children and weak minded females."

When their ideological certainties collided with the indifference and hostility of real workers, the radicals were forced out onto either of two equally uncomfortable limbs: intellectual self-hatred or scorn for the worker "masses." The former professor Daniel DeLeon, for example, identified the intellectual as a "microbe" whose nature coupled "superficiality" with the "usual accompaniment of vanity and conceit," "altogether a perambulating lump of wisdom." Socialist Party leader Algie Simons, another college graduate, insisted that he had "more faith in the rank and file than I have . . . in all the theorists and would-be teachers of the working class of America." Such denunciations led the self-educated former printer W.J. Ghent to lament, in 1909, "I had to come into the Socialist Party to find among the proletariat a savage antipathy to learning and to educated men, and to find disgruntled 'professional proletarians' playing upon this feeling for their own advantage."

The reverse side of such vicarious proletarianism, says Kraditor, was noblesse oblige toward the ideologically unwashed. Using her favorite device, a laundry list of egregious quotations which she calls a "documentary excursus," Kraditor finds references in the radical press to the apathetic worker as "eunuch," "cattle," "squeezed lemons" and "potato minds." New York S.P. member Grace Potter wondered, "Why don't they hear us calling them brother, pleading with them to break their chains and bid their masters defiance? . . . If they won't hear, they deserve to be slaves."

One might think Kraditor finds nothing to cheer about in the historical record of her subjects. Actually, that is not true. They were at least more benign than those who followed them. Ironically, the very economism that left the American socialists indifferent to, and without an understanding of, the private sphere saved them from the worst implications of their own ideology. "It was a later generation of radicals that, once in

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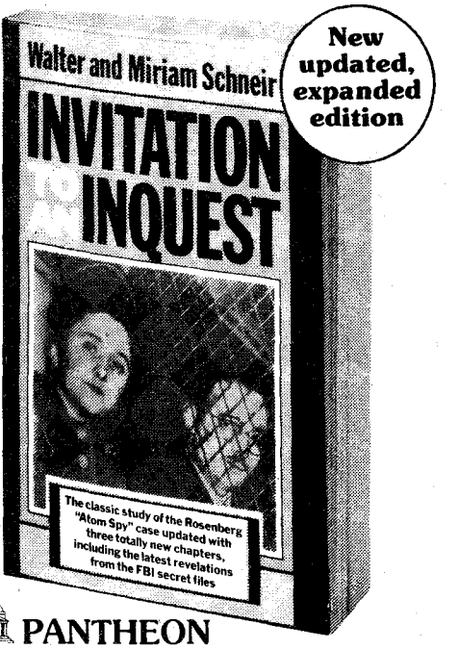
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power in other countries, discovered that private-sphere values were dangerous to the public-sphere authority and that therefore transformed the radical movements' educational efforts into socialist regimes' coercive imposition of approved beliefs." By missing the particularism of American culture, the early radicals' universal man defied historical reality. Still, Kraditor warns, "I hope I shall not be misunderstood as advocating government cognizance of ethnic, racial, and sex categories; such policy, even for 'good' objects, I consider abhorrent." At least DeLeon did not advocate affirmative action!

There is no doubt that Kraditor has rescued radical history from its hagiographers. The more fantastic and degrading expressions of American socialists have never been so assiduously catalogued. One may accept such findings, however, and still harbor grave doubts about both the intellectual and political purposes for which the author marshals her research.

First of all, there is the problem of her critical double standard. With the considerable help of hindsight, Kraditor dissects the ways in which the radicals' world view was "inaccurate" or contradictory. But what is the historical significance of such departures from clarity? Few have accused American socialists of rigorous theoretical standards, and Kraditor herself once allowed that the delusions of abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison were less important than the fact that they were harnessed to a set of humanistic means and ends. Limited as it is to textual analysis, Kraditor's intellectual muckraking offers no way to account for the "persuasiveness" of radicalism to the radicals themselves, let alone to assess their impact on society. The anthropological relativism that Kraditor extracts from social history she eagerly applies to everyone but the socialists. Deciding categorically that "socialism—or any radical ideology—is not a natural product of a living culture," she effectively deprives the subject not only of the historian's sympathy but of historical context.

In the second place, Kraditor simply defines out of the radical tradition anyone who does not fit the intellectual paradigms she reconstructs from official party presses. Her frequently invoked category of "non-radicals" includes not only socialism's avowed opponents but trade union militants, radical "progressives," secular nationalists within ethnic subcultures and even individuals who believed in "common ownership of the means of production" but for whom that belief was not all-absorbing. Thousands of working-class recruits to the I.W.W. are dismissed on the assumption that "since the turnover of members was extremely high . . . most recruits never subscribed to the official ideology." So tightly does Kraditor draw the qualifications that the vast majority of those who voted for radical tickets, marched in radical-sponsored parades and struck with radical unions cannot be counted as radicals. While this approach undoubtedly helps to demarcate (by whittling down) the subject matter, it begs the question of what to do with all those fellow travelers.

A final problem lies in Kraditor's misuse of social history. Recent literature, in part inspired by a political commitment to break through the myth of the Great American Consensus, is ransacked to contrast the working class of reality with that of doctrine. In place of the revolutionary proletariat of romantic dreams, Kraditor offers a curious creation of her own. Somehow, in her hands, the work of Herbert Gutman,

VOYAGE

Double and triple exposures of the shore
from a few miles at sea. Where the green
deepens to blue and the currents swell.
And the beige hills beyond the shoreline blur,
marking the beginning and end of our personal geography—
the soil that sprung us in a hazy rain.
No embattled moon or colliding planets to fret over,
just a pale sun providing a modicum of light,
that watery cream color in which gulls evaporate
and ambergris sizzles and sperm whales play out
their pantomime with misty harpoons: the ambivalent
light of purgatory, each of us with his two feet of railing,
debating whether to leap or vomit or clutch for dear life.
We have been on many ships—which are as one.
Many seas—which are truly one.
To what point do we arc when our straight line falters?
For surely the trip to death is always an arc, a swoon,
the final faltering of the straight way.
Swooning, as lovers must, so caught up in
the many small deaths of falling in and out of love,
giving up the ghost of the solitary spirit
each time the body makes its warmer connections.
With an umbrella to promenade the deck, to orbit
the little world of the ship on foot night after night
while the others make the smaller orbit of the ballroom,
soft-shoeing themselves into situations,
we find that in a twinkling—
a handful of days and nights—
we are already far at sea, between ports,
between the two black lines of shore that highlight
the luscious indigo on maps, and we feel
not so much lost as found: in position at last to encounter
the stray angels out of limbo, the freak dolphins with wings,
the sea god who was once an anonymous drowned man off a freighter;
in position, all tethers cut, to rise dreaming into the salt sky
with one of Botticelli's girls playing an exotic violin.
And if it doesn't work out that way—as it surely won't—
there is always our destination, cautiously approached,
the ballroom emptied and the deck again crowded,
the same cold railing and the blue swell tapering to green,
tongues wagging and cameras clicking and gulls reappearing:
double and triple exposures again, from a few miles out—
that same shore, come around the world for us
as if we never left.

Nicholas Christopher

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David Brody, John Bodnar and others is reduced to a pastiche of Samuel Gompers and the Contented Ethnic. Despite rhetorical insistence on the workers' distinct belief systems and on ethnic culture as an "autochthonous phenomenon," she writes matter-of-factly that workers seek only immediate gains, not abstract "lessons," that they join unions not out of any broad vision but for "more pay, shorter hours, and better working conditions." And, while the industrial workplace admittedly caused discomfort, it was not the sort of pain to keep a good man down. The immigrant worker did not particularly like being treated as a "hand" or a "thing" by his employer. "But if he held fast to the goals for the sake of which he had immigrated . . . the 'hand' role had little psychological impact upon him [and] he could put up with the miserable conditions of his job." A mountain of recent historical work is thus condensed into a new verse of "Whistle While You Work."

In the end, Kraditor simply discards one utopian vision for another. What Mark Twain called the Great Barbecue of business avarice in the late nineteenth century Kraditor euphemizes as a "shake up period"—"similar to the chaos that attends the construction of a new community . . . when individuals compete for leadership and status before the group has shaken down and members have come to know the virtues and deficiencies of their fellows more thoroughly." The sovereigns in such an age of uncertainty were not the Rockefellers and Harrimans but American consumers exercising their freedom of choice. Rather than some nasty system, Kraditor's turn-of-the-century America was a great cafeteria where "reform and radical movements . . . were like items on a menu from which a society hungry for adaptive changes could choose." If a reform ingredient improved the main course of "individual freedom," it might even be incorporated into the basic recipe. For example, "when enough people came to believe that the power of big business made that freedom depend on strong unions, strong unions fell inside the boundary [of acceptability]."

It was too bad for the radicals that they were not content as pastry chefs, offering an occasional dessert item. Instead they tried to alter people's basic appetites. If they had been able to think more clearly, they would have realized that *they* were the only ones who had been taken in by the power structure they opposed. After all, "a commitment to fight against something is a form of acceptance—acceptance of the personal significance of what one is fighting."

It is a wonderful world that Kraditor now seems to inhabit. No problem of power, exploitation or social conflict arises there that's worth getting excited about. It is a place not simply where you are what you eat; you are whatever you would prefer to be eating. So who needs a cooperative commonwealth? □

Sorrowing Silences, Feverish Gaps

SUZANNE MANTELL

VOICES: A Memoir. *By Frederic Prokosch. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 343 pp. $17.95.*

What's with Frederic Prokosch (Fritz to his buddies)? Prokosch, an American by birth but an expatriate by choice, is a novelist, a translator, "a talented but somewhat derivative poet . . . writing out of the general consciousness," to quote Samuel Hynes in *The Auden Generation*. An adolescent encounter with Thomas Mann gave Prokosch a "momentary glimpse of an abyss at the core of greatness." Thereafter, driven by an insatiable thirst to know "the artist as hero," he connived to meet the famous of his time. It appears from this memoir that he met no one else:

"One day I was sitting at my usual table in the piazza and I saw Wystan Auden step from the funicular." "One day I turned the corner for my usual glimpse of the [Trevi] fountain and I saw a chubby fellow sitting on the railing . . . " (Dylan Thomas). "I looked down and saw Alberto Moravia. He was taking a sunbath." "In an armchair beside me a silhouette materialized" (Nabokov!).

Prokosch not only has total recall of conversations; he also remembers what wasn't said: "I can still hear the sorrowing silences of George Santayana, the haunted little pauses of Thomas Mann, and the feverish gaps of Andre Malraux's verbosity." He kept a notebook with him for years, to preserve what the great said (or didn't say), "to tuck away a living fragment . . . like the fingernail of a saint." *Voices* is the result of those years of hard listening.

You would think Prokosch's awareness of his motives would have mitigated the profoundly sycophantic aspect of his mission, but such was not the case. Though he *knows* he's being obsequious when he tells Virginia Woolf that *The Waves* "is not a novel" but "a cobweb full of sunlight," his position vis-à-vis the celebrated people he rubbed shoulders with is still similar to that of Barbara Walters when she interviews heads of state: fawning to the max. No less cloying are the intimate questions he posed to personages within minutes of meeting them: "Do you have a definite philosophy, Miss Stein?" "Have you ever giggled at Henry James, Mr. Berenson?"

Prokosch writes that he fought against his "hunger for symbols and metaphors"; unfortunately, he lost. In fact, rather than purging the propensity from himself, he seems to have provoked it in others. "I can see in your eyebrows that you have an affinity for gnomes," Hannah Arendt tells him. "I detect in your eyes a peasant cunning and a peasant innocence," says André Gide.

But these observations pale alongside those Prokosch "detects" in the faces of those he meets: "He fixed his wise old eyes on me with a hint of a withered smile, in which I detected a mingling of connivance and accusation" (King Gustav); "He looked venerable and benign, draped in the last brocade of sunlight, but his eyes gleamed with the cunning of an old Etruscan peasant" (Norman Douglas); "When I looked at his face I was reminded of a cloud, whose curves seemed to float on the brink of evaporation" (Wallace Stevens); "I remember him still: the playful joy in his eyes, a joy which was spiced by an old Hebraic cunning and darkened momentarily by an old Hebraic sorrow" (Marc Chagall); "Malraux's cheeks were deeply furrowed and his eyes were dark and bloodshot, as though behind that intelligence there lurked a mighty sorrow, a grief which was deeper than thoughts or intuitions." At the zoo, naturally, he sees in the eyes of the lion "the simmering savannas of Uganda," and in those

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of the yaks "the vision of Tibetan avalanches."

Amazingly, there is no hint in this memoir that anyone took Prokosch less than seriously. But then, how would he have known otherwise? For him, all is solemn, especially when it comes to art. The only indication that he has a sense of humor comes when he recounts a cocktail party at which Edmund Wilson dropped a boiled shrimp from a toothpick and it landed on Edith Sitwell's "coiffure." Their conversation continued, about Milton and Dryden and Pope and Eliot, and still the shrimp lay in Dame Edith's hair.

It's easy to make fun of Prokosch—even obligatory, considering the book he has written. And yet I feel sorry for him. He has devoted his rather solitary and unsettled life to pursuing an interesting question about the nature of genius. Does it develop in response to life's experiences, or independent of them by feeding on itself? Does art sustain life, he wants to know, or does life sustain art? The problem is, he wants to know so badly it takes all the fun out of it.

Actually, wanted to know is more like it. Prokosch lives now in seclusion in a cottage in the south of France, where he labors in a "ceaseless struggle to produce a masterpiece." He is "no longer afraid of loneliness or suffering or death," because he can see "the marvelous faces of the past gathering around . . . and hear once again the murmuring of voices in the night."

Would that Prokosch's voices were substantial enough to sustain us as they sustain him. □

A Swaggering South African

JEFFREY MEYERS

SELECTED POEMS OF ROY CAMPBELL. *Edited by Peter Alexander. Oxford University Press. 144 pp. $19.95.*

Roy Campbell was the South African Hemingway. Both men, near contemporaries, spent a significant part of their childhood hunting and fishing in the wilderness, and had a lifelong passion for blood sports, violence and war. Both cultivated a heroic persona—"They blame me that I shun my fellow-doctors/ To haunt the quays, the markets, and the camps," wrote Campbell—but were actually bookish and pensive. Both spent most of their adult lives in Latin countries, converted to Catholicism (though Hemingway lapsed) and were passionately committed (to opposite sides) in the Spanish Civil War. Both flayed their friends with venomous truths, drank heavily, declined during the last two decades of their lives and died violently. Both—as Zelda Fitzgerald said of Hemingway—loved "bullfighting, bullslinging and bullshitting."

Their writing has quite a bit in common, too, including an uncanny ability to evoke what D.H. Lawrence called the "spirit of place." *Mithraic Emblems* is Campbell's *Death in the Afternoon*; *Flowering Rifle*, his *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Hemingway described the *corrida de toros* as "a crucifixion of six carefully selected Christs at five o'clock in the Monumental Golgotha of Madrid"; Campbell praised "Him who took the toss/And rode the black horns of the cross." And Campbell's "In Memoriam of 'Mosquito,' Gipsy of the Lozoya Clan" expresses the stoic pride of Hemingway's "The Undefeated":

> I never felt such glory
> As handcuffs on my wrists.
> My body stunned and gory
> With toothmarks on my fists:
> The triumph through the square,
> My horse behind me led,
> A pistol at my cutlets
> Three rifles at my head.

Campbell's poetry, lyric and satiric, is a cross between Crashaw and Pope. Energetic, vertiginous, chromatic, filled with incendiary imagery, it is composed of fire, water, earth and—when he strains for rhetorical effect—hot air. In the satires, where he risks rhyming "anemone" with "hegemony," his bandoleer of words produces smithereens and cataracts; motion, strife and rage.

Campbell got his barbaric language, knockout couplets and swaggering stanzas from Wyndham Lewis. Lewis modeled the heroes of *The Apes of God* (Zulu Blades), *Snooty Baronet* (Rob McPhail) and *The Revenge for Love* (Victor Stamp) on Campbell, and praised him in *One-Way Song*: "And there's Roy Campbell, stiff-chested and slim,/ Poised for veronicas before wild terrapin." Like Lewis, Campbell insisted:

> I will go stark: and let my meanings show
> Clear as a milk-white feather in a crow
> Or a black stallion on a field of snow.

Campbell's famous lines about the imitators of the Bloomsbury group, "On Some South African Novelists,"

> You praise the firm restraint with which they write—
> I'm with you there, of course:
> They use the snaffle and the curb all right,
> But where's the bloody horse?

confirm Katherine Mansfield's criticism of E.M. Forster: "He never gets any further than warming the tea-pot. Is it not beautifully warm? Yes, but there ain't going to be no tea."

Campbell's finest works are animal poems, love lyrics and translations of St. John of the Cross, Lorca, Baudelaire and Rimbaud. "To a Pet Cobra" conveys a complex mixture of sensuality and danger:

> I love on my bare arm, capricious flirt,
> To feel the chilly and incisive kiss
> Of your lithe tongue that forks its swift caress
> Between the folded slumber of your fangs.

The electric tremors in "The Zebras," the harmony of hooves in "Horses on the Camargue," the morbid eyes with cinders of regret in "Death of the Bull" belong to the great tradition of realistic poems that runs from Burns's "To a Mouse" and Clare's "Badger" to Rilke's "Panther" and Lawrence's "He-Goat."

Campbell's intense, dramatic, high-spirited lyrics celebrate the beauty of women and of nature, and, in "The Sleeper," the merging of the one into the other:

> She lies so still, her only motion
> The waves of hair that round her sweep
> Revolving to their hushed explosion
> Of fragrance on the shores of sleep.

In "Choosing a Mast," the planed pine takes on a tactile, functional life, which is revealed in a stunning simile:

> Smoother of forms, that her hard-knotted grain,
> Grazed by the chisel, shaven by the plane,
> Might from the steel as cool a burnish take
> As from the bladed moon a windless lake.

Jeffrey Meyers has published biographies of T.E. Lawrence, Katherine Mansfield and George Orwell. His latest work is D.H. Lawrence and the Experience of Italy *(University of Pennsylvania Press).*

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In the 1920s, Campbell had liberal views on South Africa's racial situation. But his anti-Semitism and Fascist politics in the 1930s, his belligerent personality, his uneven output and his poetic decline have unfortunately eclipsed his impressive achievements as an autobiographer, travel writer, translator (from Latin, Spanish, Portuguese and French) and lyric poet. □

Of Evolution and Earthworms

ANNA FELS

HEN'S TEETH AND HORSE'S TOES. *By Stephen Jay Gould. W.W. Norton. 413 pp. $15.50.*

The jacket copy on Stephen Jay Gould's new book of essays describes him as "perhaps the most widely acclaimed science writer of our time." The copywriter could have skipped the science writer epithet and just said that Gould is one of the greatest essayists writing in English. It's significant, though, that this absorbing collection, which ranges from a scientific and political meditation on the Scopes trial to an inquiry into the life of the mystic-scientist-priest Teilhard de Chardin, has been tarted up with a jarring and Disneyesque title. One would like to blame bad publishing P.R., but I suspect it's more than that. It is a symptom of a malady that Gould obliquely touches on throughout these essays: the cultural isolation of science that occurred after Darwin's theory of evolution became widely accepted by scientists. That this lively and elegantly written book was thought to need such an upbeat, folksy title emphasizes the hard times that serious science writing has fallen on with the general public.

Why should Darwin's theory have had such enduring cultural repercussions when equally revolutionary scientific insights have long since been comfortably assimilated? As Gould points out, Darwin's theory introduced two new and profoundly disturbing ideas. The first was the central role of randomness in nature, an idea "often coupled with chaos, lawlessness, or disorder to conjure up a vision of ultimate terror." The second was the lack of meaning or direction in natural selection. According to Darwin, evolution produces adaptation to local environments—nothing more, nothing less—and there is no way to square this with a religious tradition that stresses hierarchical structures and perfectibility. Even today, evolutionary theory is commonly misconstrued as one of progression toward ever more intricate and perfect forms—think of all those science-fiction men of the future, those brainy, hairless, nearly incorporeal beings. But there is nothing in Darwin suggesting preferential selection of complex over simple forms; reproduction and adaptation are the only "virtues" recognized in his scheme.

The nonhierarchical, amoral vision of nature implied in Darwin's theory has had a subtle but long-ranging effect. Prior to the Darwinian revolution, new scientific concepts were advanced and analyzed largely in terms of their moral and religious significance. Gould notes that even such practical topics as the geology of coal beds came under theological scrutiny. The accessibility of coal beds in the upper part of the earth's crust was believed to demonstrate "an ulterior, prospective view of the future uses [of coal] by man." It was, in other words, yet another sign of God's providence. Scientific theories also found their way into poetry, drama and philosophy. Goethe (an accomplished geologist himself) has Faust and Mephistopheles argue a much debated geological question of the day—Mephistopheles, appropriately, taking the side of those who believed the earth to have a molten fiery core.

Darwin's vision, for all its elegance and beauty, does not lend itself to that sort of cultural interpretation. To quote Louis Agassiz, the famous naturalist who was an opponent of Darwinian theory, it makes nature out to be "merely the product of force and matter." And this cold assessment is to a large extent the view of science still held by the general public.

Gould's response to this modern view of science is complex. On one level, *Hen's Teeth and Horse's Toes* sets out to demonstrate the sheer esthetic pleasures of science—and on that level, it succeeds wonderfully. The essays often begin with apparently out-of-the-way questions: Why are there no wheels in

Anna Fels is a physician who writes on scientific and medical subjects.

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nature? Why did Darwin spend years of his life studying worms? Why did hyenas inspire loathing in ancient times? But as these questions are pursued to their denouements, they yield insights into both the subject at hand and the larger issues of scientific process and scientific thought. As Gould notes: "Small items with big implications are my bread and butter." Darwin's interest in earthworms, for example, flowed naturally from his general theoretical concerns. "What better than worms: the most ordinary, commonplace, and humble objects of our daily observation and dismissal. If they, working daily beneath our notice, can form much of our soil and shape our landscape, then what event of magnitude cannot arise from the summation of small effects. Darwin had not abandoned evolution for earthworms; rather, he was using worms to illustrate the general method that had validated evolution as well. Nature's mills, like God's, grind both slowly and exceedingly small."

On another level, these essays return again and again to the subject of how the great scientists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have come to terms with modern "godless" science, and many of the book's most moving passages deal with this issue. Teilhard de Chardin's mystical-spiritual interpretation of evolution is touched upon, and Gould quotes T.H. Huxley's passionate defense of science and his own agnosticism. But it was Darwin who summed up the problem, as he did so often, in his eloquent if blunt fashion: "I feel most deeply that the whole subject is too profound for the human intellect. A dog might as well speculate on the mind of Newton. Let each man hope and believe what he can." In this area, as in so many others, Gould is in agreement with Darwin. His book explores the political and social uses and misuses of science, while clearly noting its limitations in the religious and moral spheres. Science, Gould believes, has lost none of its excitement or intellectual power by accepting this modern role. It has simply, like so many of our contemporary arts, become more secular. □

HIS FACE

Once he wished
to wear his face
quietly as a shadow
now it startles him
with its tics which
seem less cautious,
the light deep
in his eyes isn't
happy, but light,
like faces, changes
as it stays the same,
familiar in its strangeness,
& now his hair has revolted
& the weight in his cheeks
is impacted with, what—
desire? His body is never
this much trouble, yes,
something is still missing
or wrong around his eyes
when he sees himself
suddenly in shop windows
& even his smile does not
fit his feelings. I think
something remains stuck
in him, some stubborn light
that stays damaged despite
each year's new mortgage
of spirit, call it what you like,
his face survives its wealth of hours,
his smile holds back its hurt,
while the life behind it keeps ebbing,
if fitfully, like laughter in an empty bed.

Philip Schultz

FILMS.

ROBERT HATCH

Return of the Jedi
La Truite
La Boum

George Lucas, the presiding genius of *Star Wars*, wants us to take his enterprise seriously. When *The Empire Strikes Back*—the middle film of the middle section of the projected nine-part saga—was released three years ago, he remarked to a *New York Times* interviewer, "Fairy tales are how people learn about good and evil, about how to conduct themselves in society." Now that the central trilogy has been completed with *Return of the Jedi* (trilogies one and three are still in prospect), I wonder what moral instructions the huge work will provide, if indeed the plan is fulfilled some time around the end of the century.

As the overall title indicates, a major ingredient of *Star Wars* is the spectacle of aerial navies clashing in far reaches of the universe. But that is only one of its popular enticements, and it is a wasting asset. However brilliantly conceived by the cinematic tricksters (Lucas's crew is the best in the business), dreadnoughts as big as Manhattan attacking asteroids of devastating firepower rapidly lose their ability to amaze an audience satiated with such marvels.

The other principal allurements of the work (along with Jabberwockish predators and voracious jellies) are supernatural powers (levitation, telepathy, etc.) that can be acquired by arcane exercises in virtue and, for leavening, a succession of adorable creatures endowed with ingratiating character traits. In *Return of the Jedi* (directed by Richard Marquand), these aspects of Lucas's imagination considerably overshadow the formal encounters between the military machines.

Fabulous, and fabulously attractive, humanoids have been with us from the start. For years, moviegoers have been proclaiming their affection for R2-D2, the chirpy, cocky robot, and his sidekick, the pompously omniscient C-3PO. Other favorites are Chewbacca, the seven-foot wolfman, master navigator and most ebullient of comrades, and Yoda, the Jedi master, a minute sage with long, floppy ears and a winning habit of misplacing his verbs. In the new

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film we are given an entire tribe of Ewoks, furry little creatures as cuddly as koalas and smart as Pygmies, who live semiarboreal lives on a richly forested moon somewhere beyond the Milky Way. Their village, suspended by vines high in the trees, is everyone's childhood vision of Eden. From it they swarm down to wreak guerrilla havoc on the lobotomized minions of the loathsome Empire.

These merry and intrepid bush babies help turn the tide for the freedom fighters in their current assault on tyranny, but the central and long-awaited confrontation occurs when Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill), the unfledged Jedi, and Darth Vader (David Prowse), the fallen Jedi, meet face to face. Both knights are armed with magic, but Vader has embraced the "dark power of the force" and serves the evil designs of the Emperor. If you are in doubt as to which of them prevails, I will leave you so.

Used in moderation, cuteness is a useful ingredient of popular amusement, but *Return of the Jedi* resorts to it in giant doses, and I doubt that viewers cooing over valorous balls of fur are learning much about good and evil. Nor do I think they will conduct themselves better in society by being persuaded that morality deals in absolutes and that virtue is the prerogative of supermen. Fairy tales no doubt embody our fears and aspirations; how reliable they are as moral guides is another question.

Joseph Losey's *La Truite* (The Trout) is taken from Roger Vailland's novel of that name, and the press kit quotes a summary passage from the book: "It is interesting to watch, in the well-defined space of a fish tank . . . a power struggle that shows itself at every moment in acts and movements of intense clarity, and with such a violence that every living thing is forced to express itself with the utmost precision and elegance."

With that assertion as a guide, Losey has produced a tense, stylish, highly mannered but engrossing study of thrust and parry in predatory affluent society. The action begins at a fish-breeding station high in the Jura Mountains, where Frédérique (Isabelle Huppert), repelled by the lubricity of her father and his companions, vows early in life to take from men everything she can get. On this principle, and to gain some freedom of movement, she marries the homosexual Galuchat (Jacques Spiesser), one of the farm technicians, and moves with him to Paris. There she

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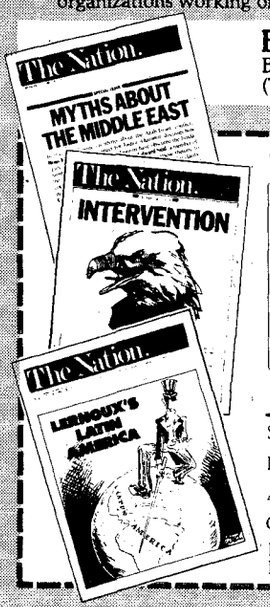

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infatuates an international businessman and inveterate womanizer named Rambert (Jean-Pierre Cassel), but allies herself with his younger, much cooler associate, Saint-Genis (Daniel Olbrychski), whom she accompanies on a business trip to Tokyo.

Like the trout of the title, Frédérique is succulent, efficient and coldblooded. Without being actively cruel, she creates occasions for suffering. Galuchat, having failed at suicide, becomes the alcoholic attendant to a wife he cannot bed. Rambert gambles away his fortune and murders his wife (Jeanne Moreau), whose contempt he can no longer endure. Marilene (Lisette Malidor), the statuesque black mistress of Saint-Genis, retires with dignity, saying only, "I left a really good man for him." Saint-Genis, himself a trout, understands Frédérique and loses to her with grace. Only the Japanese tycoon, Hamada (Isao Yamagata), is old, wise and powerful enough to swim freely in the tank. And only with him does Frédérique let down her guard.

La Truite is a grim comedy of manners and a diagram of power, manipulated at the multinational level. Its metaphorical cogs mesh ingeniously, but the characters become so invested with significance that they move rather stiffly. Or perhaps the chill I felt was what Losey intended—the air is no doubt glacial at the corporate heights. I cannot recall a movie as meticulously orchestrated or conducted with as firm discipline.

What an adolescent girl finds commendable in an adolescent boy was a wonder to me in my youth and baffles me still. The discrepancy between their respective charms struck me anew while I watched *La Boum*, Claude Pinoteau's pratfall comedy from a script by himself and Danièle Thompson.

The title is Parisian slang for a teenage party (loud music, strobe lights), and the movie comes upon Vic (Sophie Marceau), a lovely girl of 14, at the moment of her first close encounter with the opposite sex. This daunting experience coincides with an adulterous blow to her parents' marriage, and the two amatory skirmishes are developed in seriocomic counterpoint. The youngsters are rather touching, their elders rather absurd; but love prevails all around, thanks to the intervention of Vic's great-grandmother (Denise Grey), herself a veteran only recently retired from the wars of the heart. *La Boum* is spirited frivolity, deftly performed. □

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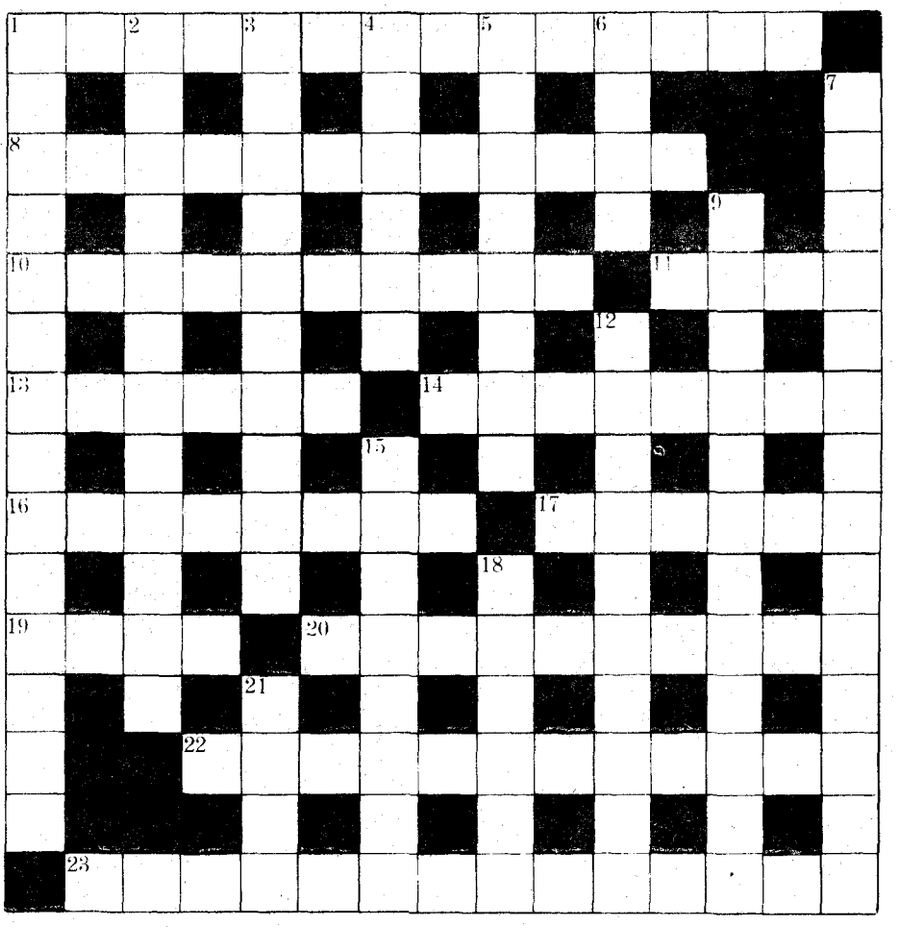

ACROSS

1 Book drill—preparing for the bench, possibly. (6,8)
8 Signaling the different birds there's darkness during storms. (12)
10 Come in force, with boldness. (10)
11 To get under one, you have to be good! (4)
13 Money common in Pennsylvania. (6)
14 One of the Little Women in dire need around it, as ordered. (8)
16 They may be only incidental with minced pies and poems. (8)
17 Talking rot today in recess? Quite the other way around! (6)
19 Once broken, it can be eaten with ice cream. (4)
20 It won't be if it continues to get around, which might make Circe smile! (10)
22 Rather obvious interjection concerning the location of Paradise. (7,5)
23 Footnote that is played down? (14)

DOWN

1 What Jocko might get in a jar from a spring? Followers of 1 across might use them in turn. (6,8)
2 Gone into, as it seems, arrangement of terms. (12)
3 A fitting change, perhaps, from the old German allowance of food. (10)
4 High-toned gentlemen. (6)
5 Gas mains in the building. (8)
6 Require, or just want? (4)
7 Probably up and down, if you're walking in low shoes toward the High Church! (6,8)
9 Walesa? He certainly has drawing power, but this is naturally attractive. (8,4)
12 The sort of decoration found on a map? (10)
15 What one does after a let ball shows what some ex-soldiers may be in. (8)
18 Nine, as a sort of color. (6)
21 Bad feet? You can have a holiday here! (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1966

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